

10 DDL
A N
Historical Essay
UPON THE
CONSECRATION
OF
CHURCHES.

With an Account of the

Form and Ceremonies of CONSECRATIONS among the Jews, Heathens, and Christians; describing the Magnificent Feasts and Entertainments upon those Joyful Occasions; and proving the Antiquity of those Anniversary Festivals, call'd WAKES, observ'd in Country Villages, in Memory of the Consecration of their particular Churches.

To which is added,

A Form of Consecrating Churches, Chapels, and Church-Yards, pass'd in the Lower House of Convocation, 1712, with a Design to have it establish'd among the Offices of the LITURGY, and compiled chiefly for the Consecration of the New Churches. Copy'd from the Journal of the House, and never before made Publick. With the Authority of the CANON-LAW for the RECONSECRATION of Churches.

By Mr. LEWIS.

L O N D O N,

Printed for G. STRAHAN, at the Golden Ball over-against the Royal Exchange; C. RIVINGTON at the Bible and Crown in St. Paul's Church-Yard; J. SMITH in Exeter-Exchange; J. GRAVES in St. James's Street; and C. KING in Westminster-Hall. M DCC XIX.

Price (Stitch'd) Two Shillings.





THE PREFACE.



OW meanly soever I may have acquitted my self in the following Essay upon the Consecration of Churches, I am confident I have not miscarry'd in the Choice of a Subject; for, can it be unseasonable to assert the Antiquity of this Rite, at a Time when Multitudes expect daily to be Eye-Witnesses of its Celebration, and to partake in the publick Joys of the Solemnity? And what more necessary than to vindicate the Use of it from the vile Scurrility and wicked Scoffs of Dissenting Buffoons and Atheists, who have already pronounc'd the Practice of it for Popery, Conjuring, and Profaneness, and the Bishops who officiate for Jesuits, Rakes, and Sorcerers? But better Language no

Gentleman is to expect from the Vomit of a Sink, nor more Truth from those mercenary Pens that are inspir'd by the Father of Falshood, and paid for the Lies they tell by the Children of Schism and Disobedience.

It is observable, that the most celebrated Pamphlets our Dissenters have lately oblig'd us with, swell and overflow with most scandalous and spiteful Invektives against the conforming Clergy; and if these Priest-Hounds can but get Scent of any Thing that smells of a Parson, away they run with full Cry and open Mouth, and were their Fangs as good as their Throat, the whole Order would, in a very little Time, be torn and worry'd in Pieces; as if a Man were instantly forsaken of God and Goodness, the Moment he enters into Holy Orders, and begins to be a Villain as soon as the Church takes him into her Service. These are the cleanly Conveyances of Religion and Characters to the common People, and these are the only saleable Commodities that suit the nice Taste of this polite Age; and the Press sweats again to answer the Demands of the Publick with new Impressions.

But what Times are we fallen into, when no Character, however sacred, will be a Defence against the Scoffs and Ribaldry of Infidels and religious Libertines? When the most eminent of our Clergy, with their
very

The PREFACE.

v

very Names, are publish'd in Print, under Representations as infamous as Tongue or Malice can invent or express? And who are they that have, with all the Passion and Bitterness imaginable, promoted these scandalous Outrages, but those Pensioners of the Faction, who, when they have gone as far as they are able, would have the Villainies they have invented stand good to Perpetuity against the Persons they have traduc'd? What a Comfort will it be another Day, to have these Monuments of Infamy rise up against us, and to find in the Memorials of this Age (that must furnish out the History of After-Times) so many Reverend and Learned Men stigmatiz'd for Jesuits, and the basest of Rascals, without any Contradiction or Controul; to the Scandal, most certainly, of the English Nation throughout Christendom, wheresoever these Instances of their licentious Boldness shall happen to come; to the Reproach of the most glorious Church upon the Face of the Earth, even to future Generations, to whom the Story of these Insults upon a Profession of Men shall be transmitted, and not only unpunish'd but uncontradicted: For the present Impunity and Protection of these Libellers it is, that gives Spirit and Encouragement to the Enemies of the Church, and almost breaks the very Hearts of her Friends.

And

And yet these Men, at the same Time, not only value themselves upon their Zeal for the King and the Protestant Religion, but deliver over to the Devil, for Plotters and Papists, all the true Sons of the Church, and the best Subjects that refuse to joyn with them. They dress up honest Men in the Shape of Villains, and call them Papists, and then it is but exposing them in a College-Cut, with a Crucifix in their Hands, and a String of Beads at their Girdles, and their Business is done; they immediately fall under the Rhetorick of Porters and Carmen, and the Envy and Resentment of a whole Nation is little enough to crush them.

But from whence have these Writers a Patent to make Men of what Religion they please, in spite of all Protestations and Oaths to the contrary? Is it not strange, that we, who subscribe the Articles of the Church of England, so destructive of all the Errors of Popery, that renounce Transubstantiation, the Pope's Supremacy, Idolatry, and Rebellion for the Cause of Religion, that notwithstanding all this, must still be Papists, and Popishly affected? What shall we say to these Men; who, instead of pulling down Popery, strengthen it, by reckoning so many learned and pious Divines of that Persuasion; and whilst they endeavour to dishonour our Clergy by so odious a Name, do no small Honour to the Papists, by making the

The PREFACE.

vii

the most eminent Party of Men both for Learning and Integrity that is now in the World, to be Favourers of their Way: Hoc Ithacus velit; the Jesuits indeed are apt to feign several Death-bed Reconciliations to their Church, to gain Credit by the Accession of some of its eminent Opposers, but this they do sparingly, as the easy People can swallow the Cheat; but these Papist-Makers of ours will make an Offering to them of Thousands together, and send them the Protestant Churches of England and Ireland in one Present.

If any are the Firebrands of the World, and set up Popery, under the Disguise of Protestants, they are surely these Men, that Cry down all for Papists that they have any Prejudice against, and out of Malice to us, assist the common Enemy, and become the most liberal Benefactors to the Church of Rome that ever it had since the Reformation. Let the Pretensions of our Sectarists be what they will, their Practices, I shall always believe, are the same in the Consequences of Danger to the Church of England, as so many Cells and Societies of Priests and Jesuits: For our Establishment is the great Bulwark in Christendom against Popery, and by what Hand soever it comes to be destroy'd, whether by open Enemies or pretended Friends, whether by Battery or Mine, whoever makes the Breach, does an equal Service to the Church of Rome,

Rome, and an equal Injury to the English Communion.

But what a Stratagem is here all the while? Our Enemies put Shams upon their Followers under the Mist of Canting and dark Words, that they are not able to see thro'; and whilst they distinguish themselves under the Title of True Protestants, they reflect upon us as Cheats and Counterfeits. The Word Protestant serves for all Ends and Purposes with them; but who knows what it means more than a Protester against the Pope? A Man, it seems, may deny the Divinity of Christ, and the Procession of the Holy Ghost, and yet be a True Protestant. And what do they mean by the Protestant Religion, whose Security they pretend to have so much at Heart? They cannot understand the Religion of Luther, for there are few such in the Kingdom; nor of Calvin, for then an infinite Number of Sects among us must be excluded; if they design all Dissenters from the Church of Rome, they include all Religions in the World but that, and make Protestant Pagans as well as Protestant Christians; they take in all Errors and Heresies beside Popish ones, and expose the Reformation under the Note of an unchristian and unsociable Confusion: So that our true Protestants are a Body of Men compos'd of all Religions, provided they do but agree in a common Opposition to

The PREFACE. ix

to the Church of Rome; their Religion is a Mass of all other Errors wrapp'd up under one Denomination, a Medley of Opinions united in a Confederacy against the Church, and divided in the Truth.

I can find no where in the Bible any Christian under the Title of a Protestant, nor do I read of any Protestant Creed in the ancient Councils; and yet as the Word has obtain'd in the Church of England to signify a Member of the Reformation, I confess my self to be a Protestant; so that I do not oppose the Denomination, but the Abuse: If they would make an honest Use of the Word, and govern themselves with a Submission to the Authority of the Church, I should take it for an Honour to be of their Faith and Family; but to put my self upon a Level with Turks, and distinguish my self by protesting against the Papists, which every Mussulman in the World does as well as I, is what I will for ever be irreconcilable to: Such true Protestants as the Canonical Sons of the Church I am exceedingly pleas'd with, both as to Name and Thing; but as to that adulterate Issue who take upon themselves the Name of their Mother, and yet disclaim her Authority and Doctrine, they are no other, in my Opinion, than so many Banditti, or debauch'd Branches of a noble Family, and wheresoever the Name of a true Protestant is made Use of for the

a

covering

covering of Faction, Heresy, or Schism, I shall for ever look upon those True Protestants, so call'd, as the Scandal, not only of the Church, but of Religion it self.

The Reason why I have so particularly stated the Case of Popery and Protestantism between us and the Dissenters, was, if possible, to spoil the Edge of one of their keenest Weapons, which they are always brandishing before the Eyes of weak People, instead of Argument, and which, I make no question, will be objected against my self, on account of this Essay; whose Design, you will be apt to bear, is to introduce into a Protestant Church one of the Roman Rites, and the gaudy Pomp and Superstition of the Papists. But if this Piece of Art proves ineffectual, our Enemies have another in Store, which I expect will be play'd against me; for what Exemption can I pretend from not falling under the Censure of a Rake and a Debauchee more than the most pious Prelates and Presbyters, who have been shewn to the World under those false and infamous Characters? Especially considering, that in the following Treatise I have strenuously recommended the primitive Custom of Feasting cheerfully and plentifully, (a Sin in any but themselves) upon the joyful Days of the Consecration of Churches.

It is become, it seems, one of the genteel Accomplishments of the present Age, to talk of
the

The PREFACE. xi

the Orthodox Clergy, as if there were nothing but Ignorance and Debauchery among them; to revile and reform them is the most plausible Vent of Peevishness and Ill-Nature, and to abuse them is the only Evidence of some Mens Godliness, as it is of other Mens Wit. With what Transport of Attention will a moderate Churchman listen to a foul (tho' false) Story of an ungodly Parson, and with what indefatigable Industry will he spread and improve the Tale? You cannot endear him more, than by supplying him with such scandalous Reports; and a zealous Brother will even abate you something of the Price of his Commodities for your good News; it puts him into a pleasant and jolly Humour, and the demure Man grows Witty and Satyrical, and glosses upon the Story with notable Essays of sanctify'd Wit and Raillery. Our Adversaries have their Offices of Intelligence, where they receive and deliver out Lies and Reflections, in order to make the Clergy odious and contemptible; and they maintain their Emissaries upon a Publick Stock, who are sent Abroad to catch the Vomit of Atheists and Drunkards to throw in their Faces; they publish and authenticate the slanderous Aspersions that those Sots make in their more than Bestial Debauches; what they intend for Sport these propagate in Malice; they vent the scandalous Tales a-

a 2

mong

mong their Friends for sad Certainties, and confirm them with Sighs and solemn Nods, (as the others did with Oaths and Damme's) as if they were troubled at the Evil they report, when as indeed they are then most tickled and pleas'd. 'Tis Marrow and Fatness to them to hear and tell Stories of the Sons of the Church; no one can oblige them more than he that so entertains them: And when Informations fail, they have good Inventions to supply that Want; so that no Innocence can escape them, no Virtue is Protection against them. They'll interpret every harmless Action into a Miscarriage, and aggravate every the smallest Miscarriage with all the most heinous Circumstances of Guilt and Villany; and where no Blot is to be found, none to be pretended, there they vilify the Virtue of those unblameable Persons, as dull Morality, and them as Strangers to the Spirit and Mystery of Religion.

But these Protestant Infidels are never more virulent, than when they are railing against the Revenues and the Patrimony of the Church; they are strangely fluent upon this Theme, 'tis their everlasting Subject; for here their Envy settles upon its proper Object, nothing dazzles them more than Money, because they value nothing more, and they can endure any Thing in a Clergyman with Patience rather than a fair Benefice;

fice ; with them 'tis the most glorious Piece of Reformation to make the Priesthood vile and sordid, and to disrobe them of all secular Privileges and Dignities, is to bring them to the Pattern of Christ and his Apostles : It is the Duty, it seems, of Christian Princes to keep the Character of the Clergy as low as it was reduc'd by the Persecution of Heathen Emperors ; and to suffer themselves to be abus'd is the indispensable Duty of the Christian Priesthood, and Contempt and Poverty are the peculiar Ornaments of a Ministerial Spirit. All Ecclesiastical Grandeur is Popish and Antichristian ; and because the Dissenting Preachers are maintain'd upon the Alms, and fed out of the Basket of their Followers, these Pensioners of the Party labour to raise the Indignation of the People against the Revenues of the Church, insomuch, that if any of them have at any time a Mind to exercise their Zeal and Malice, they fall a whetting their Claws upon Gowns and Cassocks ; and tho' these Wretches are very little to be admir'd for their Manners and Ingenuity upon any Account, yet their Barbarity shews it self in nothing more shamelessly, than in this Insolence towards Men so infinitely their Betters, by the Right both of their Parts and Education : This is a Rudeness peculiar to themselves, from all other Savages in the World besides ; and tho' we
rake

rake the East and the West-Indies, there are no People so prodigiously fallen from all Sense of Humanity and civil Manners, as to think their Priesthood the most plausible Object upon which they can discharge their Malice; much less to think it an Argument of their Loyalty and Acceptance with their Prince, to affront and vilify the Officers of those sacred Rites, to which he himself submits in the Exercise of his own Devotions.

But, hard Fate! We, the Clergy of this Church, and only We, seem to be cut off from the common acknowledg'd Rights of Priesthood, as if there were an Exception against us in the general Rule, and all the Ministers of Religion were to be honour'd except those of the Church of England. So that were it not for the Right we expect at a juster Bar than that of Man's Judgment, we were the most unhappy of the Creation; for we are treated here, as if we had no Claim to the Civility and Good-Nature of Mankind, but were either another Race of Creatures, or Outlaws of this. The Apostle suppos'd it reasonable we should be worthy of double Honour, but the World thinks single Respect too much for us, and treble Contempt scarce enough. We look not for the great Regards or Venerations of the World, and 'tis not fit we should; but yet there is no Man, that is not perfectly stupid, but would be sensible of such

such Treatment; and I think we ought to resent it, since the Ground of our Reproach is Contempt upon Religion, if not upon the Author of it: Abstract us from our Relation to that, and our Order may, without Boasting, pretend to as much Wisdom and Knowledge, Ingenuity and Virtue, as other Men: Our Education is as handsome and ingenuous, and I know not why the Parts of the Clergy should not be equal to those of other Ways of Breeding; so that we might pass well enough in the World, and, for ought I know, meet with tolerable Reception in it, were it not that God has honour'd us with the Dignity of being his Embassadors, and has employ'd us in the Affairs of Souls. And therefore, upon the whole Matter, I must say, that we are so far from having Honour for our Office and our Work-sake, that we are lessen'd by them; and if a Clergyman chance to meet with respective Entertainment in the World, the Kindness is extorted by some personal Advantages he owns, and not given him for his Character and Function; no, he's taken down, and is so much less in Consideration of it. So that God himself is affronted, and Religion vilify'd, by the excessive Scorn that is thrown upon the Dispensers of his Truth and Laws; and 'tis Pity that our Concernment in this Matter will not permit us, without incurring more
Re-

Reproach, to reprove *this Indignity to our common Saviour* : But, alas ! all we can do, without the loud Imputation of preaching up our selves, is to bear our Reproach in Silence, and to mourn in Secret for that horrid Atheism and Scorn of all Religion, or of the best, which is the Occasion of it ; for where there is Contempt of the Clergy above-board, there must be a Disvalue of Religion under it.

And therefore it highly imports Authority to nip this wanton Humour in the Bud, and to crush it whilst 'tis young and tender, for as yet it has found but slender Entertainment with wise and sober Persons ; discreet Men, that have not more Religion, have yet at least more Wit and good Manners : The only Zealots in the Cause, are the young Nurselings, and small Infantry of the Wits, the wild and hair-brain'd Youths of the Town ; a Sort of Creatures that study nothing but Oaths and Idleness, that design nothing but Debauchery and Extravagance, that aspire to no higher Accomplishments, than a few Shavings of Wit gather'd out of Plays and Farces, and these they abuse too, and labour to pervert their innocent Expressions to obscene and irreligious Purposes ; so that Shakespear and Dryden are profan'd as well as the Holy Scriptures : 'Tis these Apes of Wit, and Pedants of Gentility, that would make
Atheism

The PREFACE. xvii

Atheism the Fashion, and Profaneness the Character of a Gentleman, that think it a Piece of Gallantry to scoff at Religion, droll upon God, and burlesque his Embassadors; that account it an Argument of Ingenuity and Judgment to be above the Follies of Conscience, and the noblest Part of a genteel Behaviour to counterfeit an haughty and supercilious Disdain of Religious Sneaks, and to beg all Men that are respectful to their Consciences, for soft and Priest-ridden Fools, to be scar'd with the empty Thunder, and fantastick Dread of invisible Powers.

Now, certainly, these mighty Casuists must needs be wonderfully qualify'd to judge of the most serious Enquiries in the World. Are they not likely, think you, to survey the deep Foundations of Religion, to search into the Grounds of Faith, to take an Account of the Credibility of the Scriptures, or the Succession of the Christian Priesthood? And when they have so utterly emasculated their Bodies and Understandings with Wine and Women, are they not prodigiously able to examine what agrees with, or dissents from, the Dictates of pure and impartial Reason? Are they not likely to determine what is truly Great and Generous, that never heard of any other Maxims of Philosophy, but what they have pick'd up at Plays, out of the stiff Disputes of Love

b

and

and Honour? And are they not in a fair Way to give an Account of the Records of past Ages, that were never acquainted with any History, than perhaps that of the Follies and Intrigues of a Foreign Court, or the Knight-Errantry of the Bishop of B——r? And yet how briskly do these giddy Youths determine these and a thousand other difficult Theories, that they never had Learning or Patience enough to understand, much less, to make an exact and satisfying Search into their Truth and Evidence.

Alas, young Men! you are too rash and forward; your Confidence swells above your Understandings; 'tis not for you to pretend to Atheism, to mock God, and ridicule Priests; 'tis too great a Privilege for Boys and Novices; 'tis Sawcyness for you to be Profane, and to censure Religion, Impudence and Ill-Manners; and whatsoever rational Pleas Atheism may admit of, or how open soever are the Cheats of Priests, 'tis not for such as you to pretend to Wit and Learning enough to understand or detect them; and therefore take heed of exposing your Vanity and Weakness; be advis'd not to set up before your Time; and better furnish your Understandings before you pretend to vent your Wit.

And yet, methinks, 'tis pretty to hear one of these little Mushrooms charge Religion with Credulity and Easiness of Belief, and talk

The PREFACE. xix

talk confidently, that 'tis Want of Judgment and Enquiry that betrays Fools and ignorant People to be scar'd with the Tales and Threatnings of ambitious tricking Priests, tho' it be so utterly impossible, that any Men should be more chargeable with Credulity than themselves, and no Man's Faith is capable of being more Implicite than the Infidelity of these Wretches; nor can the most illiterate Peasant take up his Country's Religion upon more slender Grounds and Motives. In short, these empty Sponges suck in Opinions for their Agreeableness with their debauch'd and licentious Practices, without ever considering their Truth and Evidence; for, alas! they never troubled their Heads with such Enquiries; and therefore, whatever they pretend, 'tis not their Reasons but their Lusts that cavil at the Principles of Religion, and they expose the Clergy because they disturb them in their Vices. Their Irreligion is an After-game of their Debauchery, they are forc'd to it in their own Defence; their Wickedness has made Infidelity their Interest, and Atheism their Refuge; and then they cannot, will not believe, for no other Reason but only because they dare not,

Nor is the Pedantry and Ill-Manners of these Rakes less notorious than their Debaucheries; they never meet with a Clergyman of Learning and Reputation, but they must

be pecking at him with their Quibbles and Objections; and if he slight their Impertinence, (as all discreet Men do) then the next Time they meet their dear Hearts, with what triumphant Shrugs do they boast their Success against the Man in Black, and so laugh and drink themselves into Confidence and Folly? And what more Rude and Clownish, than to loath and nauseate him with the Filthiness of their Discourse, to pelt him with Oaths, or Ribaldry, or Atheistical Drollery, which he is oblig'd (were he inwardly as great a Villain as themselves) to detest by his Profession? A Piece of Breeding much like his, that would never entertain a Vestal with any other Conversation than by describing the Rites of Priapus, or the lascivious Arts of Cleopatra.

And so I leave these Offenders to the Correction of the Publick Rods, and, believe me, 'tis high Time that Authority check and chastise this Boyish Humour; for at the same Time that Men shake Hands with Religion, they bid Adieu to Loyalty; in that whilst they own no Tyes of Conscience, they know no Honesty but Advantage, and Interest is the only Endearment of Duty to their Prince; and therefore, whenever this happens to run counter to their Loyalty, 'tis then the strongest and most effectual Inducement to Attempts of Treason and Rebellion;

bellion; and thus they may prove good Subjects, as Rogues and Outlaws are, who will be honest when 'tis their Interest; but when 'tis not, then any Thing is their Duty that contributes to their Security. And, therefore, I leave it to Authority to consider how much it concerns them to restrain the Insolence of this wanton Humour, and to punish those who make it their Business to propagate irreligious Principles, as the worst and most dangerous Enemies to the State.

But when these doughty Heroes of Infidelity are laying themselves out in scoffing at Religion, and drolling upon the Priesthood, it is observable, that they confine their Characters to one Party of Men only, all the Saints, it seems, being of the other Side. An Edinburgh Doctor of Divinity, and a Student in the Temple, tells his Reader, that when he charges the Clergy with being guilty of all the Vices and Villany of Men and Devils, he means only some of the Clergy; and a modern Apologist, for fear of Mistakes, informs us, that the harmless Descriptions, in his little Treatise, are intended only for the Picture of one Set of Men; and who, I beseech you, are the choice Exceptions from the general Rule, but the very Originals of those Characters that are so unjustly fix'd upon the Orthodox

dox Clergy? *Who are they but the wretched Scum of the Priesthood, who glory in making the whole Order as vile as their own Morals, and as publicly infamous as their own Extravagances.*

The Sectarists have their Champions likewise; Mr. T——land, the great Advocate of Mahometanism and Presbytery, after he had discharg'd his Poyson upon the Clergy in his last Preface, gives this Caution; Let it be always understood, that I mean corrupt and interested Priests, the bitterest Enemies to good Ministers, for whom I both have and shall ever retain the highest Veneration; so that the Church Clergy are the corrupt Priests, and the Conventicle Teachers are the good Ministers; a smart Conceit, and distinguish'd like a Dervise!

But, alas! how easy is it for us to Recriminate, and make Reprisals upon the Dissenting Preachers? Who torture their Discourses into a Dialogue of Hickups and Grimaces between themselves and their Audience, and are such Barbarians and Savages as to imagine, that Roaring and Raving Fury is far more Noble than Speaking or Reasoning. They build their Interest upon Glozing and Hypocrisy, and play the Parasites for their Bread, and are forc'd to smooth over the reigning Sins of the People,
for

The PREFACE. xxiii

for fear of being turn'd off by their good Masters by whom they are maintain'd. Their Pulpits are meer Pasquils, and their late Writings will serve as a Common Place against Christianity it self; neither the scurril Wit of that Buffoon Lucian, nor the Malice of Julian the Apostate, having left any Thing half so scandalous in all their Libels against the Priesthood of the Christians. And with what Face can they set up for Temperance and Sobriety, after so many notorious Instances they have given the World, both in their Cups and in their Passions, of Luxury and Profaneness? And, really, habitual Looseness and Impiety is become, of late, the Character of many of them, only there is no Sin in the Saints; but as it was said of Cato, Intemperance shall rather be a Virtue, than Cato not Virtuous; so Drunkenness and Sensuality shall rather be no Vices, than these precious Ministers reputed Vicious.

And if there be any such Art upon the Earth as Priestcraft, these Mechanick Preachers are Masters of the Mystery, for by this Craft they have their Wealth; and if the Laity are Priest-ridden, it is by these compleat Jockeys, who ride a Cock-horse upon the Shoulders of the Rabble, as the Saints and Patrons of True Protestants: Who rode more furiously than they when they got into the Saddle, when an Almighty,
Inqui-

Inquisition was set up in every Parish, when you might see a Pontifical Presbyter rule as King and Priest over the Estates and Consciences of his subjected Congregation, and there was but One Commandment to keep instead of Ten, Obey the Presbyter? He that has a Mind to see the same Days again, let him but read Presbyter for King in the first Book of Samuel and the eighth Chapter, and he shall there find what he is reasonably to expect.

*And so I take Leave of them with this Satisfaction, that when the Enemies of the Church have spit their Venom, I shall for ever reckon it a Part of my Glory to be hated and libell'd by the common Adversaries of Religion; and when I think of Dying, I remember what Tully said, It is one of my Comforts, that when I part from the Dunghil of this World, I shall meet *Leilius*, those faithful Spirits that had Virtue enough to be true to the Church and to the Laws unto the last.*

THE



THE CONTENTS.

CHAP. I. *The Meaning of the Word
Consecration, and how it is to be
understood.* Page 1

CHAP. II. *The Use and Form of Con-
secrations among the Jews.* 7

CHAP. III. *The Practice of the Old Ro-
mans in the Consecrations of their
Temples.* 19

CHAP. IV. *The Care of the first Chri-
stians in the solemn Consecration of
Places for divine Worship. The Method
and Solemnity used in the Consecration
of a Church at Tyre.* 29

CHAP. V. *A Panegyrick upon the build-
ing of the Churches, spoken to Paulinus,
Bishop of Tyre, at the Consecration of
that Church.* 37

CHAP. VI. *The Form and Solemnity of
the Consecration of the Martyrium at
Jerusalem, built by Constantine over the
Sepulchre of our Saviour.* 69

CHAP.

The CONTENTS.

- CHAP. VII. *Some Authorities of later Ages collected; with the Decrees of two Councils, one held at Winchester, the other at London, relating to the Consecration of the English Churches.* 78
- CHAP. VIII. *The Magnificence, the Ornaments, and the Form of the first Churches among Christians; and the Reason of distinguishing them by the Name of our Saviour, of the Virgin Mary, of Angels, Saints, Martyrs, &c.* 88
- CHAP. IX. *The publick Feastings, and other Demonstrations of Joy used by Jews, Heathens, and Christians, upon the Days of the Consecration of their Temples and Churches.* 100
- CHAP. X. *The Antiquity of observing Annual Festivals, in Memory of the Day of the Consecration of Churches; with an Account of our Country Wakes in England, of their Rise, and Establishment.* 107

N. B. By Mistake, the two Paragraphs, pag. 16. are transposed; so that the first in the Page is to be read last.



AN
Historical Essay
UPON THE
CONSECRATION
OF
CHURCHES.



CHAP. I.

*The Meaning of the Word Consecration,
and how it is to be understood.*

HOEVER takes the Pains
to search into the Religious
Customs of Mankind, will find
it difficult to discover a People
so Barbarous, who have not erected very
B costly

2 *An Historical Essay upon the*

costly and magnificent Structures in Honour of the *Deity*, and for the publick Exercise of their Devotions; and when they had rais'd and adorn'd those *holy Buildings* with all the Pomp and Decorations they could invent, they thought it not enough barely to devote them to the sacred Duties of Religion, unless they also *set them apart* by some peculiar and solemn Rite of a formal *Consecration*. The Light of Nature could teach Men, that *holy Actions* were to be celebrated in holy and *hallowed Places*, distinguish'd from *vulgar Use* by some outward Ceremony of Veneration and Respect, in order to give a Figure to Religion, and to impress a more awful and devout Sense of it upon the Minds of its Professors.

It is certain, that Churches and Temples in themselves are no more than ordinary Buildings, compounded of the common Materials of *Lime* and *Stone*, and may, without *Sacrilege* or Indevotion, be apply'd to any Use whatsoever the Founders please; but as soon as the Rite of *Consecration* passes upon them, they instantly commence *Holy Ground*, and carry with them such a Spirit of *Reverence* and *Sanctity*, as strikes with a mighty Influence upon religious Minds, above whatever they can feel in other *Fabricks*, rais'd only to answer the Demands

3

When a Church has receiv'd the holy Rite of *Consecration*, it becomes immediately exempt from the Power of the *first Founder*, who otherwise might challenge a Propriety in it; that which the Ground

B 2

and

(b) Hooker's Ecc. Pol. B. 5. Sect 16.

(c) Tho. Aq. 3. par. q. 83. Artic. 3. *Quod Ecclesia & Altare & alia hujusmodi consecrantur, non quia sunt Gratiae susceptura, sed quia ex consecratione adipiscuntur quandam spiritualem virtutem, per quam apta redduntur divino cultui.*

4 *An Historical Essay upon the*

and the Expence of Building made the *House of Man*, is made by *Consecration* the *House of God*, and being once *dedicated* to his holy Service, the Property thereof is vested in him, and in him alone: The Founder can never after lay Claim to any Pretence of Right, or reserve any Part of it for his own Use or Pleasure, without laying himself under the Guilt of *Sin* and *Sacrilege*. This certainly was the Case of *Ananias* (d), who when he had sold his *House*, kept back Part of the Money, as if he would divide the Sum between *God* and *himself*; a dreadful Monument of *Sacrilege*! and for ever to be remember'd by Princes and private Persons, who have devoted any Part of their Revenues for the founding of *Churches*, and yet have impiously robb'd *God*, by perverting the holy *Patrimony* to answer the Ends of *Luxury* and *Ambition*, or even the most pressing Exigencies of the *Publick*! The *Gentiles*, by the *Light of Nature*, had discover'd these Sentiments of *Piety*, and therefore in the *Consecration* of their *Temples*, they solemnly pronounc'd these Words (e). *They exempted from the Right of Men, and from*

(d) Acts 5. 2.

(e) *Se ex profano usu & humano jure, templum, cellam, mensas, arulas, quaeque eo pertinent eximere.* Alex. ab Alex. Gen. Dierl. 6. c. 14.

Consecration of Churches.

5

from profane and common Use, the Temple, Tables, Vault, the Altars, and whatever belong'd to them; appropriating them only to the Service of that God to whom the Fabrick was intended in the Dedication.

But, alas! *Sacrilege* has been long struck out of the Catalogue of *English Sins*, and to exclaim against it, is to write *Panegyrics* upon the Superstition of *Papists*, and *Satyrs* upon *Protestants*: What? a Prince the *supreme Head* of the Church, and has not Power to dispose of its Revenues? Will you reflect upon the Glory of the first *Reformers*, who seal'd their Abhorrence of *Popery* with their Blood, and overthrew the Kingdom of *Antichrist*, by spoiling those *Egyptians*, and borrowing of them their Jewels of *Silver*, and Jewels of *Gold*, and *Raiment*? This has been the *Puritanical* Jargon from the *Reformation* to this Instant; and the eager Eyes of Avarice and Rapine have been strongly fix'd upon the delicious Morsels of *Church-Lands* to this very Day.

And who more forward in the Cry than our *modern Calvinists*, who deafen the People with the Din of *Popery*, and throw *Religion*, like unslack'd Lime, into their Eyes, and then hare them out of their Wits by Visions of *Popes* and *Goblins*. But the true Meaning of what they call

6 *An Historical Essay upon the*

call *Popery* is this; the *Antichrist* they would confound is the Order of the *English Hierarchy*; the Rights and Offices of the Church are the Excrements of the *Scarlet Whore*; and all that is left us of *Decency* and *Ornament* in our *Temples*, falls under the Head of *Monuments* of *Superstition* and *Idolatry*. This is the *Popery* they fear, and these the *Papists* they hate; and all for the Sake of *St. Peter's Patrimony*, the sweet Endowments that go along with them. And what is become of the *Church of England* at this Rate, or what viler Design for the very Extirpation of it can be imagin'd in the whole World, than first to set the People a Madding against *Popery*, and then to possess them all, that the *Discipline* of the Church is *Popish*, and the *Episcopal Clergy* and *Laity* are *Priests* and *Papists*? The Quarrel of our *Sectarists* with the Church of *Rome* is not so much out of *Zeal* as *Faction*, and they are a Terror to *Popery* only so far as one *Competitor* may be a Terror to another; the *Feint* indeed looks that Way, but the *Blow* is made at us; for when they are dressing up *Popery* as formidably as they can, they take abundance of Pains to make the *Church of England* appear the *Popish Monster* they are describing, and there it is they discharge their *Venom* in the End. But in
my

Consecration of Churches. 7

my Opinion, *Presbytery* comes every jot as hard off the Tongue as *Popery*, and for my Life I can find no more Charms in the Letters and Syllables of the one than of the other.

C H A P. II.

The Use and Form of Consecrations among the Jews.



THE Consecration of holy Places has been a Rite, I observe, of universal Use, and celebrated by the Light of Nature, in all Ages and Nations where ever Religion has made any tolerable Progress : But to justify and give a fuller Sanction to this Ceremony, I shall lay before the Reader how far it has prevail'd among *Jews*, *Christians*, and *Heathens*, and by this Means reconcile, if possible, this venerable and ancient Usage to the perverse Taste of those scrupulous *Devotionists*, who open their Mouths wide, and by all the little Arts of Noise and *Falshood* attempt to explode and banter it out of the World.

And

8 An Historical Essay upon the

And the first Notice Antiquity gives us of the Rite of Consecration among the *Jews*, seems to be in the Practice of *Abraham* (f), who planted a Grove in *Beer-sheba*, and called there upon the Name of the Lord. The most learned (g) Expositors agree, that this Grove was planted for a Church or Oratory, wherein himself and others that were so devoted, might supplicate and present their Addresses to the true *Jehovah*; and the following Ages, from this Practice of the Patriarch, were induc'd to consecrate peculiar and determinate Places for the Duties of Religion; and the succeeding Customs both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, in consecrating Groves for the Uses of Superstition and Idolatry, (of which Mention is frequently made in the Scriptures) makes it plain and evident, that they conceiv'd this planting of a Grove by *Abraham*, was but the consecrating of it to the Service of God, and for the solemn Invocation of his Name.

The same holy Writ gives us an Account of *Jacob*, that when he beheld the Vision, and (h) awaked from Sleep, and said,

(f) Gen. 21. 33.

(g) Locum Orationis & Ecclesie sue constituit inter Arbores. Musculus in Gen. cap. 21. Nemus quoddam tanquam Templum effecit, ut esset Oratorium tam sibi quam aliis coeuentibus verum Deum. Cajetan. in locum.

(h) Gen. 28. 16, 17.

Consecration of Churches. 9

said, *How dreadful is this Place*; that he rose up early in the Morning, and took the Stone which he had put for his Pillow, and set it up for a Pillar, and pour'd Oyl on the Top of it; and then, and not till then that it was thus consecrated, he call'd the Name of the Place Bethel, which in the Greek Language signifies the House of God. So venerable was the Esteem of this Act of Jacob's in the Sight of God, that he distinguish'd himself by the Name of the (i) God of Bethel, as a Place immediately dedicated to his own Worship; and in Reference to this Consecration, this Place was thought the most proper, even by God himself, for the Patriarch (k) to offer Sacrifice to the Lord, and to perform his Vows. Nor can I doubt, but that when Jeroboam the Son of Nebat made Choice of (l) Bethel to be the Seat of one of his Golden Calves, he had Respect unto its Consecration by the Patriarch Jacob, there being otherwise many Places in his new usurp'd Kingdom of more Convenience for his Subjects, and less obnoxious to the Power of the Kings of Judah than this Bethel was; and without Question, the Act of Jacob in consecrating the Stone

C

at

(i) Gen. 31. 13.

(k) Gen. 35. 16.

(l) 1 Kings 12. 9.

at *Bethel* gave the same Occasion to *Jero-boam* to profane it, by setting up his *Golden Calves*, as the Grove of *Abraham* entic'd the idolatrous *Jews* and *Gentiles* to profane the like Places with as impure Abominations.

But this, the Adversaries of this *Rite* will object, is no more than *human Invention*, a Ceremony of Pomp, used only by the *Patriarchs*, without any positive and *express* Command from *God himself*. In Answer to this Cavil, (which we always hear of when Argument fails) let us look into the *Dedication* of the *Tabernacle*, and we shall find, that tho' it was made by *God's own Appointment*, tho' he prescrib'd as well the Matter as the Form of it, and descended even to the Nomination of the Workmen that were to take care of its Embroidery, yet he did not think fit it should be used in his publick Worship till it had been dedicated to that *sacred End and Purpose*; for thus *God* speaks to *Moses* in the Way of Precept (*m*), *Thou shalt take the anointing Oyl and anoint the Tabernacle, and all that is therein, and shalt hallow it, and all the Vessels thereof, and it shall be holy; and thou shalt anoint the Altar of the Burnt-Offering, and all his Vessels, and sanctify the Altar, and it shall be an Altar most holy.*

And

(*m*) *Exod.* 40. 9.

Consecration of Churches: 11

And thus did *Moses* in Conformity to God's Commands, he rear'd up the *Tabernacle*, and dispos'd of every Thing therein in its proper Place, *hallowing* the *Tabernacle*, and the *Altar*, and the *Vessels* of it; and then, and not till then, was it thought fit for publick Sacrifice, and to be honour'd with the Solemnity of the Divine Presence; for, as it follows in that Chapter, first *Moses* offer'd upon the *Altar*, so prepar'd and *consecrated*, a *Burnt-Offering* and a *Meat-Offering*, as the Lord commanded, and then God vouchsaf'd a publick *Sign* that he took Possession (n), *A Cloud then cover'd the Tent of the Congregation, and the Glory of the Lord fill'd the Tabernacle.*

The solemn Form of this Consecration is thus related by the (o) *Jewish Historian* in a more particular Manner; “ In the Beginning of the second Year, in the Month which the *Macedonians* call *Xantichus*, and the *Hebrews*, *Nisan*, upon the New Moon, they *dedicated* the *Tabernacle*, and all Things belonging to it; and God presently testify'd, that both their Gifts and Works were acceptable in his Sight by his Presence, honouring the *Tabernacle* after this Manner; the Sky being elsewhere clear

C 2 “ and

(n) *Exod.* 40. 34.

(o) *Joseph. lib.* 3. c. 9.

12 *An Historical Essay upon the*

“ and fair, over the *Tabernacle* alone
 “ there was a Cloud not wholly thick,
 “ nor yet so thin that a Man could see
 “ thro’ it, from whence there descended
 “ a Dew that gave Testimony of God’s
 “ Presence unto them that had Faith;
 “ *Moses* having recompens’d all the
 “ Workmen with such Rewards as they
 “ severally deserv’d, offer’d Sacrifice ac-
 “ cording as God had commanded him
 “ in the Door of the Porch of the *Ta-
 “ bernacle*, a Bull, a Ram, and a Kid, for
 “ their Sins; and with the Blood of the
 “ slaughter’d Beasts he sprinkled the
 “ Vestments of *Aaron*, and *purify’d* both
 “ him and his Children with Fountain-
 “ Water and the precious Ointment, to
 “ the End that they might be *sanctify’d*
 “ to God. And for seven Days Space *he*
 “ *consecrated* both them and their *Vest-
 “ ments*, and the *Tabernacle*, and those
 “ Things that belong’d to them, with
 “ the Oil above-mention’d, with the
 “ Blood of Bulls and Rams, slain every
 “ third Day, after their Kind. But on
 “ the *eighth* Day he proclaim’d a Holy-
 “ day and *Festival* to all the People, and
 “ decreed, that every one of them should
 “ particularly sacrifice according to his
 “ Ability; and they, with Emulati-
 “ on striving to exceed one another, o-
 “ bey’d him, and offer’d up their Sa-
 “ crifices

Consecration of Churches. 13

“crifices according as it was commanded them.”

Nay, more than this, it was believ'd in these elder Times, that the Country or Territory wherein was no Place *set apart* for the Worship of God, was *Unhallow'd* and *Unclean*; which, I think, I rightly gather from that Story in the Book of *Joshua*, of the Altar built by *Reuben, Gad*, and the half Tribe of *Manasseh*, upon the Bank of the River *Jordan*, which *Joshua* and the Elders, as the Words intimate, suppos'd they had done, lest the Land of their Possession, being by the River *Jordan* cut off from the Land of *Canaan*, (where the Lord's *Tabernacle* was) and so having no Place therein *consecrated* to the Worship of God, might otherwise be an *Unclean* and *Unhallowed* Habitation. Hear the Words of *Phineas* and the Princes sent to dissuade them, *Joshua* xxii. 19. and judge whether they import not as I have said, *If the Land, say they, of your Possession be Unclean, then pass ye over into the Possession of the Lord, where the Lord's Tabernacle dwelleth, and take Possession amongst us; but rebel not against the Lord, nor against us, in building you an Altar, besides the Altar of the Lord your God.*

After

After this great Example of the *Tabernacle*, we find a solemn *Dedication* of the Temple built by *Solomon*, celebrated with Prayer and Sacrifices in the most devout and magnificent Manner. (p) And God vouchsaf'd a visible Testimony of his Presence; for *it came to pass when the Priests were come out of the holy Place, (where they had laid the Ark) that the Cloud fill'd the House of the Lord, so that the Priests could not stand to minister because of the Cloud, for the Glory of the Lord had fill'd the House of the Lord.* (q) “ These Things the Wisdom of *Solomon* did not account superfluous; he knew how easily that which was meant should be Holy and Sacred, might be drawn from the Use whereunto it was first provided; he knew how bold Men are even to take from God himself; how hardly that House would be kept from impious Profanation he knew, and right wisely endeavour'd, by such Solemnities, to leave in the Minds of Men that Impression which might somewhat restrain their Boldness, and nourish a reverend Affection towards the House of God. ”

When

(p) 1 Kings 8. 10, 11.

(q) Hooker's Ecc. Pol. Book 5. Sect. 12.

Consecration of Churches. 15

When this Temple was destroy'd, and rebuilt by *Zorobabel*, after the Return of the *Israelites* from Captivity, we have an account of a second *Dedication* of it (r), *And the Children of Israel, the Priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the Children of the Captivity, kept the Dedication of this House of God with Joy.*

The extraordinary Zeal of *Darius*, a Pagan Prince, towards the erecting and the perpetuating of this Temple, is very surprising; he was wonderfully solicitous about this Fabrick; he restor'd the Golden and the Silver Vessels that were carry'd to *Babylon* by *Nebuchadnezzar*, and made a Decree, That his own Goods, and a Branch of his Royal Revenue, should go towards the Building and the Magnificence of the Work. This Decree he confirm'd with a second, and a very solemn one (s), *That whosoever shall alter this Word, let Timber be pull'd down from his House, and being set up, let him be hang'd thereon, and let his House be made a Dunghil for this; and the God that hath caused his Name to dwell there, destroy all Kings and People that shall put to their Hand to alter and to destroy this House of God which is at Jerusalem. I, Darius, have made a Decree, let it be done with Speed.*

Herod,

(r) Ezra 6. 16.

(s) Ezra 6. 11, 12.

Herod, from an Air of Popularity more than from any Value for Religion, pull'd down this Temple of *Zorobabel*, and built it again with many Additions of Ornament and Magnificence: With what Alacrity and Pomp the Dedication of this Temple was celebrated, we have an Account from the *Jewish* Historian in this Manner (t): "The People were replenish'd with the Fulness of Joy, and every one gave Thanks unto God, because the whole Work was so speedily finish'd; and they wish'd all Happiness to the King for his Cost and Diligence in the Execution and Finishing of it; and they celebrated a great Feast in Honour of the Restoration of the Temple."

Upon the Profanation of this Temple by *Antiochus*, *Judas Maccabeus* was so concern'd about the Consecration of it again, that (u) he chose Priests of blameless Conversation, such as had Pleasure in the Law, who cleans'd the Sanctuary, and bare out the defil'd Stones into an unclean Place; and when as they consulted what to do with the Altar of Burnt-Offerings which was profan'd, they thought it best to pull it down, lest it should be a Reproach to them, because

(t) *Joseph. lib. 15. c. 14.*

(u) *1 Macc. c. 4. v. 41, 2, 3, 4.*

Consecration of Churches. 17

the Heathen had *defiled* it, therefore they *pulled it down*; and now he proceeds to the *Dedication* (x), *Look*, says the Historian, *at what Time and what Day the Heathen had defiled it, even in that was it dedicated with Songs, and Citherns, and Harps, and Cymbals; and so they kept the Dedication of the Altar eight Days, and offer'd Burnt-Offerings with Gladness, and sacrific'd the Sacrifice of Deliverance and Praise.*

I shall conclude this Account of the Jewish Nation, to prove the Antiquity of this *holy Rite*, with what Mr. Hooker observes upon the same Occasion (x), “The
 “Argument which our Saviour uses against *Profaners* of the Temple, he
 “taketh from the Use whereunto it was
 “with Solemnity *consecrated*; and as the
 “Prophet *Jeremy* forbiddeth the carrying
 “of Burdens upon the *Sabbath*, because that was a *sanctify'd* Day, so because the Temple was a Place *sanctify'd*, our Lord would not suffer, no,
 “not the Carriage of a Vessel thro’ it.
 “Christ would not suffer that the *Temple*
 “should serve for a Place of *Mart*.
 “When therefore we *sanctify* or *hallow*
 “Churches, that which we do is only
 D “to

(w) 1 Macc. c. 4. v. 54, 56, 57.

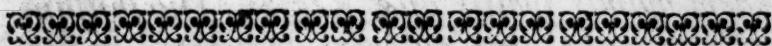
(x) Hook. Ecc. Pol. Book 5. Sect. 12.

18 *An Historical Essay upon the*

“ to testify that we make them Places of
 “ publick Resort, that we invest *God him-*
 “ *self* with them, that we sever them
 “ from *common Uses.*”

Thus have I acquitted my self, (and
 fully, I am perswaded) in defending the
 Use and Antiquity of this Rite of *Conse-*
cration among the *Jews*; wherein it ap-
 pears, with what Strictness and Solemn-
 nity they *consecrated* their Temples and
 Altars, and how careful they were in re-
 newing this Rite when their Temple was
 rebuilt, even *upon the old Foundation*,
 or their Altars profan'd: It might have
 been wish'd, therefore, that our first *Re-*
formers, in Imitation of those religious
Jews, had *consecrated* again the Churches
 and Altars they receiv'd from their
 Popish Ancestors; because there are
 some Things that border near upon *Ido-*
latry and *Superstition*, in Part of the *Ro-*
man Worship and Ceremonies: This, per-
 haps, would have silenc'd the Cry of *Po-*
pery against us at its first setting out, tho'
 the Noise of it is now become so loud
 and frightful, as not easily to be charm'd
 down. The *Puritans*, in the very Infan-
 cy of the *Reformation*, took abundance
 of Pains to reproach our *Churches* as the
Temples of Baal, and as *abominable Styes*,
 only upon the Account of their having
 been profan'd with the Rites of *Popery*;
 yet

yet it is observable, that their *Posterity*, in the *Great Rebellion*, could easily digest that *Scruple*, and exercise their Sort of *Devotion* in the very *same Churches*, and upon the very *same Altars*, without any Ceremony of a new *Consecration*.



C H A P. III.

The Practice of the Old Romans in the Consecrations of their Temples.



UT that I might not seem to *Judaize*, by laying too great a Stress upon the Practice of the *Jews* in their *Consecrations*, I proceed to shew, what I hinted before, that this *Rite* is absolutely *Moral*, and no Part of the *Ceremonial Law*; because the *Heathens* had discover'd, by the *Light of Nature*, that publick Edifices, design'd for the Purposes of Religion and divine Worship, ought to be solemnly *dedicated*, or set apart by a distinct *Form of Words*, for those holy Uses.

And here, to go no farther than the *Roman Story*, being the best constituted and the most flourishing State among the

20 *An Historical Essay upon the*

Heathens, we have, in its first Infancy, an Account of a Temple dedicated by Romulus unto Jupiter Feretrius, of which Livy gives this Relation (y), *Jupiter Feretri (inquit Romulus) hæc tibi victor Rex Regia arma fero, Templumque iis Regionibus quas meo animo metatus sum, dedico, sedem opimis spoliis quæ Regibus Ducibusque hostium cæsis, me autorem sequentes posteriferaferent.* Unto which Words of Romulus, being the formal Words of the Dedication, the Historian adds his own, *Hæc Templi est origo, quod omnium primum Romæ Sacratum est*; this is the Original of that Temple, which was the first that was ever dedicated in the City of Rome. To set this Matter in the clearest Light, we are to observe, that Romulus, having vanquish'd Tolumnius, a poor neighbouring King, in the Head of his Army, and brought his Armour into Rome in triumphant Manner, design'd to erect a Temple to Jupiter, from hence nam'd Feretrius, for the safe securing and preserving of those glorious Spoils; and having so design'd the Temple, he thus addresses himself to the God; O Jupiter Feretrius, *I, by this Favour made a Conqueror, do here present unto thee these Royal Arms, and dedicate, or design, unto thee a Temple in those Regions which*

(y) Hist. Rom. Dec. 1. l. 1.

Consecration of Churches. 21

which in my Mind I have mark'd out for that great Purpose, to be a Seat for those rich Spoils, which Posterity, following my Example, having slain Kings or the Chief Commanders of their Enemies, shall present unto thee. Which Form of Words did so appropriate that Place to the Service of *Jupiter*, that afterwards it was not to be debas'd to any other Uses.

This was done by *Romulus* himself; but afterwards, when *Numa Pompilius* had improv'd the Discipline of Religion, and establish'd a fix'd *Priesthood*, tho' Kings and Consuls might design and dedicate, or in other Words, prepare a Temple for their Gods, (for so the Word signifies in their ancient *Rituals*) yet the *Consecration* of it was the peculiar Office of the *Pontifex Maximus*; and the Chief Priest did usually perform that Ceremony, as plainly appears by the Case of *Caius Flavius*: For whereas by the Laws of *Rome* it was permitted only unto Consuls, or such as commanded in Chief, to erect Temples for the Gods, *Cornelius Barbatas*, who was then the Chief Priest, was requir'd by the People, notwithstanding, to consecrate the Temple of *Concord*, that was built by this *Flavius*, tho' a Man of no publick Office or Character in the Commonwealth; of which Transaction *Livy* gives this Account, *Ædem Concordiæ*
in

22 *An Historical Essay upon the*

in areâ Vulcani summâ Nobilium invidiâ dedicavit; coactusque consensu Populi Cornelius Barbatas, Pontifex Maximus, verba præire, cum more majorum negaret nisi Consul aut Imperatorem posse Templum dedicare. He dedicated, with the greatest Envy of the Nobility, the Temple of Concord in the Court of Vulcan; and Cornelius Barbatas, by the Voice of the People, was compell'd to dictate the Form of Consecration, since, by the Custom of our Ancestors, no Man under the Degree of a Consul, or an Emperor, was permitted to dedicate a Temple. Where we are to observe by the Way, that Templum dedicare, in the Language of the Historian, signifies only to erect and prepare the Temple, (tho' we use it promiscuously with the Word Consecrate) and to declare unto what Deity it was intended; and this was the Point in Controversy, that formerly had been permitted only unto Kings, Consuls, and chief Commanders, and therefore not to be allow'd to this Caius Flavius, being no more than a private Man; and then the Verba præire, to dictate or direct the Words by which the Temple was consecrated, was the Office of the Pontifex Maximus; and this Cornelius Barbatas was compell'd to do by the Common People, because it was against the ancient Custom, that so great an Honour should be bestow'd

Consecration of Churches. 23

flow'd upon so mean a Person as *Caius Flavius*. The same Office was discharg'd by *Plautus Elianus*, who was then the Chief Priest of the Romans, in the Consecration of the (z) *Capitol*, when the Foundation of it was new laid, in the Time of *Vespasian*; and so *Vopiscus* (a), in the Life of *Aurelianus*, tells us, That when he had subdu'd *Zenobia*, the gallant Queen of the *Palmireni*, he gave Orders to one of his Officers to build a Temple with the Spoils of the conquer'd People, which done, he adds, that he would write to the Senate, *ut Pontificem mittat qui dedicet Templum*, that they would send the Pontifex, or Chief Priest, who should accordingly consecrate it; an Office, questionless, that had not peculiarly belong'd to the *Pontifex Maximus*, if there had not been some certain *Form*, some appointed Ceremonies, constantly made Use of in these Consecrations, which none but Persons of the highest Office and Character were by Law to execute.

Now that there was some certain *Form*, some particular Ceremonies, always made Use of by the Chief Priest in their Consecrations, appears from a Remark of *Pompeius Festus*, an old Grammarian, who derives

(z) Corn. Tacit. Hist. l. 4.

(a) Fla. Vopisc. in Vit. Aurel.

24 *An Historical Essay upon the*

tives the *Latin Word Fanum* (which signifies a *Church, or Temple*) from *Fando*; and the Reason he gives for this Derivation is, *quod dum Pontifex dedicat, certa Verba fatur*, because the *High Priest* delivers certain Words (or a certain set Form of Words) in the Dedication; which Form of Words, or some Part of them, at least, together with the other Rites and Ceremonies used in those Solemnities, I cannot better shew than in that Summary or Abstract of them which *Alexander ab Alexandro* has drawn up in the following Manner (b): *Ea vero Consecratio, vel a Consule vel Imperatore accenso foculo fit cum Tibicine, verbis priscis & solemnibus, præeunte vero Pontifice Maximo, præfante carmen, capite velato, & concione advocata ac jussu populi: The Consecration was perform'd by the Consul, or Chief Commander of the Army, a small Fire in a Pan, or Chafing-Dish, being carry'd by them, or before them (as the Use then was); the Cryer with a loud Voice using the old and solemn Form of Words, as they were dictated by the Pontifex, or Chief Priest; the Pontifex repeating a set and certain Song, with his Head cover'd, the whole Body of the People being call'd together; (which last Clause, touching the Authority or Command of*
the

(b) *Geneal. Dier. l. 6. c. 4.*

Consecration of Churches. 25

the People, was used only in the Time of the Popular Government, and not when the Emperors had obtain'd the State) and then it follows in the Author, *Templi vero Consecratio fiebat, ut qui Templum Aedemve dedicaturus erat, postem tenens accenso foculo, & advocato Numine cui Templum Aedemve sacrantur, &c.* Which done, the Consecration was dispatch'd in the following Manner; The Founder of the Temple (for so I understand the Word *Dedicaturus* in this Place) laying fast Hold on one of the Posts or Pillars of it, with a small Fire-Pan in his Hand, as before was said, and calling upon the Deity to whom the House or Temple was by him intended, did openly declare, *Se ex profano usu, & humano jure Templum, cellam, mensas, arulas, quæque eo pertinent eximere, eaque conceptis verbis, ipsi Numini, (tunc Numen nominat) divina humanaque omnia consecrare; That he exempted from the Right of Men, and all profane and common Use, the Temple, Tables, Vaults, and Altars, and all Things belonging to them; and he dedicated and appropriated to that sacred Deity (which Deity he then also nam'd) those and all other both divine and humane Things, in express Words, fram'd and design'd for that Purpose.*

The same Observation is likewise made by *Servius* upon these Words of *Virgil* :

In medio mihi Cæsar erit, Templumque tenebit.

That is, says the Commentator, I will bestow this Temple upon Cæsar; the Author using, in this Place, a Term frequently met with in the Pontifical of the ancient Romans, or such a Word as the Roman Pontifex made Use of in those Dedications (c), *Nam qui Templum dicabat, postem tenens dare se dicebat Numini, quod ab illo necesse fuerat jam teneri, & ab humano jure discedere.* For he that was to dedicate the Temple, laying hold on one of the Posts or Pillars of it, declar'd, that he bestow'd it upon the Deity; which, by that Deity, was even then to be holden and enjoy'd, and to be alienated for ever from the Right of Man. Where by the Way, this holding of the Post or Pillar by the Founder, was in the Name of the very *Numen* to whom the Temple was intended; and was like the holding the Ring or Key of the Church-Door by him that is inducted to the Cure of Souls, whereby he takes Possession in the Name of God. I have laid down these Passages at large in the Words of the Author, that we may see that there were *Verba Prisca & Solemnia*, an ancient and prescrib'd

Consecration of Churches: 27

scrib'd Form of Words made Use of in the *Heathen Consecrations*, tho' the whole Form and all the *solemn Words* that were used, are no where extant in my Authors.

These Observations, I hope, will be thought sufficient to shew how far the *Light of Nature* could direct Mankind in the *Dedication* of their Temples; and therefore the Adversaries of this Ceremony ought to forbear their Outcries of *Judaism*, or *Papery*, upon such of our Bishops who shall hereafter celebrate the holy Rite of *Consecration* upon any of our *new Churches*. I would have it remember'd likewise, that the same *Light of Nature* could teach what Veneration was due to all the *holy Utensils* and Accommodations that belong'd to those Places; how they became for ever exempt from *human Right* and Jurisdiction, never to be degraded to any Common or *Lay Uses*. I cannot therefore, in this Place, omit to applaud the pious Care of some few Divines in our Church, who (merely from a natural Regard to holy Things) preserve the *Linnen*, and *Vestments*, and whatever else has been worn out in the Offices and Duties of the *Church*, in a Chest or Repository, in order to secure the *sacred Remains* from being mangled and abus'd to Vulgar or *Domestick Purposes*.

28. *An Historical Essay upon the*

Mr. Baxter, a rigid Calvinist, could confess, that (d) *Temples and Ustensils, devoted and lawfully separated for holy Uses, are holy, as justly related to God by that lawful Separation.* And Mr. Hooker is of Opinion (e), "That we are not to condemn all Things as unmeet, the like whereunto has been either devised or used haply amongst *Idolaters*; for why should Conformity with them in Matter of Opinion be lawful, when they think that which is true, if in Action, when they do that which is meet, it be not lawful to be like unto them? Are we to forsake any true Opinion, because *Idolaters* have maintain'd it? Or to shun any requisite Action, only because we have in the Practice thereof been prevented by *Idolaters*? It is no impossible Thing, but that sometimes they may judge as rightly what is decent about the outward Affairs of God, as in greater Things what is true; not therefore whatsoever *Idolaters* have either thought or done, but whatsoever they have either thought or done *idolatrously* be so far forth abhorr'd."

(d) Christ. Direct. p. 915. Qu. 170.

(e) Hook. Ecc. Pol. lib. 5. sect. 12.

CHAP. IV.

The Care of the first Christians in the solemn Consecration of Places for divine Worship. The Method and Solemnity used in the Consecration of a Church at Tyre.



AM now come to enquire into this Practice of the *Consecration of Churches* among *Christians*; and here it must be confess'd, that there will be some Difficulty to discover the Use of this *Rite* in the Infancy of the Gospel, because our Records of the Customs of those early Times are so very obscure; however, I shall lay before the Reader the Observations I have made, and not without Hope of shewing him some Remains of the Footsteps of this *Ceremony*, even in the Apostolick Age it self.

That

That the *primitive* Christians had their fix'd and appropriated Places to exercise their publick Offices of Religion, is what the holy Scripture has put beyond Dispute : Of this Nature was that *Upper Room* into which the Apostles and Disciples, after their Return from the *Ascension* of our Saviour, went up, as into a Place commonly known and *separate* to that Use, there by Fasting and Prayer to make Choice of a new Apostle. This was then call'd by the Name of *Cenaculum Sion*, or the Upper Chamber of *Sion*, suppos'd by some to have been a Part of the House of *Simon the Leper*, but, however, of some Disciple of Rank and Quality, who willingly had devoted it to the Use of the Church ; it being the Custom of such Men in those early Days, when they were not suffer'd to erect more magnificent Fabricks, to *dedicate* some Part of their Dwelling-Houses for the holy Assemblies and Acts of Worship. This *Upper Room*, as the venerable *Bede* (f) gives the Account, was inclos'd afterwards with a *beautiful Church*, founded by the holy Apostles ; because in that Place they had receiv'd the Holy Ghost. Where it is to be observ'd, that this Church is said to have been founded by the Apostles, not that they built it from the Ground,

(f) *Bede, Tom. 9. de locis sanctis.*

Consecration of Churches. 31

Ground, but because it was consecrated by them, as a Place peculiarly set apart for the publick Worship of God.

In the second Century we find Pope (g) Pius writing thus in an Epistle to *Iustus Viennensis*, a particular Friend of his, *Soror nostra Euprepeia (sicut bene recordaris) Titulum domus suæ pauperibus assignavit, ubi nunc cum pauperibus nostris commorantes Missas agimus.* Our Sister Euprepeia has turn'd her House into a Church, for the Use of the poor Servants of Christ, where now abiding with our said poor Brethren we celebrate the Blessed Supper. And in another Epistle to the said *Iustus*, thus, *Pastor Presbyter Titulum condidit, & dignè in Domina obiit.* Pastor the Priest has built a Church, and so dy'd worthily in the Lord. The Word *Titulus* in this Place is properly render'd Church, according to the Ecclesiastical Notion of it; Churches being call'd *Tituli* by the Roman Christians of those Times, because by their Dedication the Name of Christ was, as it were, inscrib'd upon them, as the Custom of that Age was, to write the Names of the Owners upon their Houses. And thus we are to understand that Passage in the Canon Law, which decrees, that Bishops shall admit none into holy Orders, *sine merito & Titulo*, not being sufficiently qualify'd

(g) Pius P. ad Iust. Vien.

lisy'd in respect of Merit, and not provided of some Church to officiate in. It is to be observ'd, that neither of these two Epistles have yet been question'd by our modern Criticks, nor rank'd amongst those counterfeit Decretals, whose Authority has been so deservedly rejected by the learned Protestants.

In the next Century liv'd *Felix the First*, and not long after him liv'd *Marcellinus*, succeeding in the same See; of the first of which it is affirm'd by *Metaphrastes*, that he consecrated the House of *Cecilia*; and of the second, by *Damasus*, that he consecrated the House of *Lucina*, making them thereby Churches, or Places of religious Worship for the Use of *Christians*.

But these Ages of *Persecution* afford us not so clear nor so frequent Evidences of this Rite of *Consecration*; but afterwards the Churches of *Christians* began to rise apace, according as they met with Favour and Protection from the Emperors. Of these Times, (b) *Eusebius* tells us, that the Bishops met with the highest Respect and Esteem from People and Governors, and adds, But who shall be able to reckon up the innumerable Multitudes that daily flock'd to the Faith of *Christ*, the Number of Congregations in every City,

(b) Hist. Ecc. l. 8. c. 1.

Consecration of Churches. 33

City, those famous Meetings of theirs in their Oratories and sacred Places so great, that not being content with those old Buildings they had before, they erected, from the very Foundations, more fair and spacious Churches in every City. This, indeed, was a very serene Season; but, alas! it began to darken again, and *the Clouds return'd after Rain*; for in the very next Chapter he tells us, that in the Reign of *Dioclesian* there came out Imperial Edicts, commanding the Persecution of all *Christians*, the Bishops to be *imprison'd*, the *holy Bible* to be burnt, and their *Churches* to be demolish'd, and laid level with the Ground.

Among others in these Devastations suffer'd a very noble Church at *Tyre*, which was rebuilt with abundance of Care and Magnificence by *Paulinus* the Bishop, who assembled a great Number of *Prelates* and *Presbyters* to celebrate its *Consecration* in the most sumptuous and solemn Manner. The Method and Form of this *Rite* among the primitive Christians, will be very much illustrated by the Account *Eusebius* (i) gives us of this *Consecration*, which I shall therefore translate from the *Greek*, and offer it to the Reader in his own Words:

F

“ All

(i) Hist. Ecc. l. 10. c. 2, 3, &c.

“ All Mankind was now free from the
“ Slavery and Oppression of Tyrants, and
“ being releas'd from their former Mife-
“ ries (although several Ways, yet) all
“ acknowledg'd, as well as they could,
“ that it was the only true God who was
“ the Defender of the Pious ; but more
“ especially amongst us (all whose Hopes
“ were fix'd solely upon God's Christ)
“ there was an inexpressible Joy, and a
“ kind of celestial Gladness ; when we
“ saw all Places which, thro' the Irreli-
“ gion of the Tyrants, were a little while
“ ago totally destroy'd, restor'd to Life
“ as it were, and recover'd from a tedi-
“ ous and fatal Ruin ; and when we be-
“ held the Temples erected again from
“ the Ground to a vast Height, and in
“ Splendor far excelling those which had
“ formerly been destroy'd. Moreover,
“ the Emperors themselves, in whose
“ Hands the supreme Power was, by their
“ continual enacting of Laws in Favour
“ of the Christians, did enlarge, aug-
“ ment, and confirm the Magnificence of
“ the divine Bounty towards us. There
“ were Rescripts also frequently sent
“ from the Emperors, particularly to the
“ Bishops ; their Honours were increas'd,
“ and Sums of Money were bestow'd on
“ them.

“ After

Consecration of Churches. 33

“ After these Things, a SIGHT ear-
 “ nestly pray’d for, and much desir’d by
 “ us all appear’d, to wit, the Solemniza-
 “ tion of the *Festivals of Dedication* of
 “ Churches, throughout every City, and
 “ the *Consecrations* of the new built O-
 “ ratories, the frequent Assemblies of Bi-
 “ shops, the Concourse of Strangers from
 “ Countries far remote, the mutual Love
 “ and Benevolence of the People, the U-
 “ nion of the Members of Christ’s Body,
 “ joyn’d together in an entire Harmony
 “ and Consent: Therefore (agreeable to
 “ that prophetick Prediction, which has
 “ mystically fore-signify’d what is to
 “ come) *Bone was joyn’d to Bone, and Joint*
 “ *to Joint*; and whatever else that divine
 “ Prophecy has ænigmatically but truly
 “ declar’d. There was one and the same
 “ Power of the Holy Ghost, which pass’d
 “ thro’ all the Members, one Soul in all,
 “ the same Alacrity of Faith, one com-
 “ mon Consent in chaunting forth the
 “ Praises of God. Indeed, the Ceremo-
 “ nies of the Prelates were most entire,
 “ the Presbyters Performances of Service
 “ exact, the Rites of the Church decent
 “ and majestick: On the one Hand was
 “ a Place for the Singers of Psalms, and
 “ for the rest of the Auditors of the Ex-
 “ pressions sent from God; on the other
 “ was a Place for those who perform’d

36 *An Historical Essay upon the*

“ the divine and mystical Services ; there
 “ were also deliver’d the mystical Sym-
 “ bols of our Saviour’s Passion. And
 “ now People of all Ages and Sexes, Men
 “ and Women, with the utmost Vigour
 “ of their Minds, with joyful Hearts and
 “ Souls, by Prayers and Thanksgiving,
 “ worshipping God the Author of all
 “ Good. All the Prelates then present
 “ made publick Oration, every one (as
 “ well as he was able) endeavouring to
 “ set forth the Praises of those assem-
 “ bled.

“ And a certain Person that was indif-
 “ ferently well educated, and deserv’d
 “ to make this Oration, came forth into
 “ the Presence of a great many Bishops
 “ (that were then present at an Ecclesi-
 “ astical Assembly) who gave him Au-
 “ dience quietly and decently ; then
 “ turning himself towards one, who
 “ was the most eminent of them all, (a
 “ Bishop acceptable to God, by whose
 “ Care the Church of *Tyre*, the stateliest
 “ Fabrick amongst all the Churches with-
 “ in the Country of *Phœnicia*, was glo-
 “ riously erected) he spake thus :

C H A P.

CHAP. V.

A Panegyrick upon the Building of the Churches, spoken to Paulinus, Bishop of Tyre, at the Consecration of that Church.

YOU, the Friends and Priests of God, who are wrapt in the sacred long Vesture, crown'd with the Celestial Diadem of Glory, anointed with the holy Unction, and cloathed in the sacerdotal Robe of the holy Spirit; and you, the Grace and Ornament of this new erected and sacred Temple of God; You, who are adorn'd by God with a Prudence befitting an hoary Head, but have exhibited many glorious Evidences of a vigorous and juvenile Virtue; You, to whom God (who comprehendeth the whole World) hath granted the special Prerogative of building and renewing this Terrestrial Temple for Christ, his only begotten and his first born Word, and for his holy and sacred Spouse; You, whom one may term either a
new

new *Basileel*, the Architect of the holy *Tabernacle*, or another *Solomon*, King of a new and far more excellent *Jerusalem*; or a second *Zerobabel*, in regard you have added a far greater Splendor to the Temple of God than it had before!

Also you, the Sheep of Christ's sacred Flock, the Seat and Mansion of good Doctrines, the School of Modesty, and the reverend and religious Auditors of Piety! We, who have long since heard, by reading the holy Scriptures, the miraculous Works of God, and the loving Kindness of the Lord, declar'd by his Wonders towards Mankind, may now sing Hymns and Psalms to God, being instructed to say, *O God, we have heard with our Ears, our Fathers have told us the Works which thou didst in their Days, in the Times of Old.*

But now, having not barely by Hearing and Reports only perceiv'd the exalted Arm and celestial Right-Hand of our all-good and supreme God and King, but in Reality, and (as we may say) with these very Eyes seen the Truth and Verity of those Things which were heretofore recorded, we may sing a second triumphant Hymn, and break forth into these express Words, saying, *Like as we have heard, so have we seen, in the City of the Lord of Hosts, in the City of our God.*

But

Consecration of Churches. 39

But in what City? In this new built and framed by God; *Which is the Church of the living God, the Pillar and Ground of the Truth.* Concerning which another divine Oracle speaketh thus, *Very excellent Things are spoken of thee, thou City of God.* In which Church, since God, the Giver of all Good, by the Grace of his only begotten Son hath conven'd us, let every one here assembled cry out, with a loud Voice as it were, and say, *I was glad when they said unto me, we will go into the House of the Lord;* and again, *Lord, I have loved the Beauty of thine House, and the Place where thine Honour dwelleth.* And not only every particular Person, but let us all together rejoice, and shout forth Praises with one Spirit and one Mind, saying, *Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised, in the City of our God, even upon his holy Hill;* for he is truly great, and his House is lofty, and spacious, and more beautiful than the Sons of Men.

Great is the Lord who only doth marvellous Things, and such as are past finding out, glorious and stupendous, of which there is no Number. Great is he who altereth Times and Seasons; who deposeth and constituteth Kings; who raiseth up the Poor from the Earth, and exalteth the Beggar from the Dunghil: He hath thrust down the Mighty from their Seats, and

and hath exalted the Humble from the Earth; he hath filled the Hungry with good Things, and hath broken in pieces the Arms of the Proud. Not only amongst the Faithful, but amongst the Infidels also he hath confirm'd the Authority of those Relations heretofore recorded of him of old.

'Tis he who worketh Miracles; 'tis he that doth great Things; 'tis he who is Lord of all, he who is the Framers of the whole World, he who is Almighty, All-good, he that is the one and only God; in obedience to whom let us sing a new Song, to him who only doth wonderful Things, for his Mercy endureth for ever. Who smote great Kings, and slew mighty Kings, for his Mercy endureth for ever. For the Lord remember'd us when we were in a low Condition, and hath redeemed us from our Enemies. And let us never cease thus to praise God the Father of all.

Also him who is the Author of all Good to us, who is our Master in instructing us in the Knowledge of God, the Teacher of true Piety, the Destroyer of the Wicked, the Slayer of Tyrants, the Reformer of our Lives, *Jesus* our Saviour when we were in Despair, him let us extol, having his Name always in our Mouth. For he alone who is the only
and

Consecration of Churches. 41

and best Son of the best and greatest Father, in Compliance with his Father's Love to Mankind, most willingly cloath-ed himself with our Nature, who were bury'd in Corruption, and like a careful Physician (who for the Healths sake of his Patients looks into the Wounds, lightly stroketh the Sores, and from other many Calamities attracteth Grievances upon himself) he himself hath by himself saved us (who were not only diseas'd and oppress'd with foul Ulcers and Wounds already putrify'd, but also lay amongst the Dead) from the very Jaws of Death. For there was no other in Heaven that had so much Power, as inoffensively to minister Health to so many. It was he only therefore who, after he had touch'd our burdensome Corruption, he alone who after he had endur'd our Labours, he alone who after he had taken upon himself the Punishment of our Impieties, raised us (when we were not only half Dead, but lay altogether impure and stinking in the Graves and Sepulchers) and both in Times past and now, through his earnest Compassion towards us (even beyond our Hopes and Expectations) preserveth us, and imparteth to us an Exuberancy of his Father's good Things. 'Tis he who is the Author of Life, and the Introducer

of Light, our great Physician, King, Lord, and the Anointed of God.

But even then, when all Mankind (by the Wiles of detestable Devils, and the Operations of Spirits hated by God) lay bury'd in an obscure Night and thick Darknefs, he only by his Appearance, with the Rays of his Light, dissolv'd the manifold Chains of our Sins like melting Wax. And now, when by Reason of his so great Love and Beneficence towards us, the envious Devil, Enemy to all that is Good, and the Favourer of Evil, was in a Manner burst with Grief, and marshall'd all his fatal Forces against us; and when at first having (like a mad Dog, who with his Teeth gnaws the Stones that were thrown at him, spending the Fury he was put into against those that provok'd him, upon the lifeless Things thrown at him) turning his beastly Rage upon the Stones of the Oratories, and upon the senseless Piles of Buildings, he thought with himself that he had procur'd the utter Desolation of the *Churches*; also when afterwards he sent forth terrible Hissings and his serpentine Expressions, one while by the Menaces of impious Tyrants, at another time, by the blasphemous Decrees of profane Presidents, and moreover belch'd forth the Virulency of his Death, and with his venomous

Consecration of Churches. 43

nomous and deadly Potions poison'd those Souls that were captivated by him, and had in a Manner destroy'd them by the pernicious Sacrifices of dead Idols ; and, lastly, when he had incited against us all those that under the Shape of Men mask'd their savage Cruelty, Persons of a Disposition every Way barbarous and fierce ; then again the Angel of the great Council, that chief Commander of God's Hosts, (after a sufficient Exercise in the Combate, which the most valiant Champions of his Kingdom exhibited, by undergoing the severest Hardships with Patience and Fortitude) appearing on a sudden so utterly destroy'd, and reduc'd to nothing all his Enemies and Adversaries, that they seem as if they had never been nam'd.

But his Friends and Dependants he exalted to the highest Pitch of Glory, not only amongst all Men, but amongst the celestial Powers also, the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, the whole Heaven, and the World. So that now (which Thing never happen'd before) the supreme Emperors, sensible of that Honour they have receiv'd from God, spit in the Faces of the dead Idols, trample under Foot the profane Rites and Services of Devils, and deride that ancient Error handed down to them by Tradition from their Ancestors;

stors; they acknowledge one only God, the common Benefactor to all Men, and to them in particular, and they profess Christ the Son of God to be the supreme Ruler of all Things; they proclaim him *Saviour* in their Inscriptions upon Pillars, engraving in royal Characters his valiant Exploits and Victories (in order to their indelible Remembrance) over the Impious, in the very midst of that City which is Queen of the whole Earth.

So that our Saviour *Jesus Christ* is the only Person amongst all those who have been since the World began, that is confess'd to be (even by the Emperors themselves, who are supreme here upon Earth) not an ordinary King made such by Men, but is worshipp'd, as being the genuine Son of the supreme God, and is ador'd, as being truly and himself God, and that deservedly. For what King had ever such Power, as that he could fill the Tongues and Ears of all Men upon Earth with his Name? What King ever constituted such pious and prudent Laws, and was able to confirm them in such a Manner that they should be perpetually read in the Audience of all Men, from the one End of the whole Earth to the opposite Extremities thereof? What King hath ever, by his mild and indulgent Laws, melted and soften'd the savage and
bar-

Consecration of Churches. 45

barbarous Dispositions of the inhumane Heathens? What King, oppos'd by all Men during the Space of so many whole Ages, ever demonstrated such a more than human Valour and Strength, that he flourish'd daily, and seem'd to grow young in every succeeding Age? Who hath planted a Nation (which heretofore was not so much as heard of) not in some secret and unknown Corner of the Earth only, but even throughout the whole World which lies under the Sun? Who ever arm'd his Soldiers with the Arms of Godliness, in such a Manner, that in their Conflicts with their Adversaries they made it apparent, that their Minds were firmer than Adamant? What King was ever so potent, as to lead an Army after his Death, and to erect Trophies against his Enemies, and to fill every Place, Country, and City, *Grecian* and *Barbarian*, with his royal Palaces, and with the *consecrated* Fabricks of holy Temples, such as are those splendid Ornaments and *consecrated* Gifts belonging to this very Church, which are in themselves truly August and Magnificent, worthy of Amazement and Admiration, in regard they are evident Representations of our Saviour's Kingdom; for *he now spake and they were made, he commanded and they stood fast*; what could withstand the

the

46 *An Historical Essay upon the*

the Beck and Will of the *Word*, who is the supreme King and Governor of all Things, and is himself God?

But an accurate Contemplation and Explication of these Things particularly require a peculiar Discourse and Leisure: Moreover, a peculiar Leisure would be requisite to relate what and how great the Alacrity of the Workmen was that labour'd in the *Building*, and how it was look'd upon and esteem'd by that God himself, who inspects the living Temples of us all, and views the House built of living and firm Stones, well and securely plac'd upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, *Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner Stone*, who was rejected not only by those who were the Framers of that ancient Building which endures now no longer, but also by those Architects of that Fabrick which now is, consisting of many Persons, who were wicked Framers of evil Works. But the Father having try'd *this Stone*, and approv'd of it in Times past, and now also, laid it as the Head of the Corner of this Church, which is common to us all. Into this living Temple therefore of the living God, which is made up of us (I mean that most stately sacred Fabrick, truly worthy of God, whose inmost Recesses are invisible to the Vulgar, and are truly

truly holy, and the Holiest of Holies) what Man is he that dares look and divulge what he there beholds? Yea, who is he that can with his Eyes penetrate its sacred Inclosures, but he alone the great High-Priest of all, whose only Right and Privilege it is to make Researches into the Secrets of every rational Soul?

Unto *this Person* alone therefore be it lawful, next after the chief and principal High-Priest, if not to have the first, yet at least the second Place, in looking into and taking Care of the very inmost Recesses of your Souls; for by the Help of Experience and Length of Time he hath both made accurate Enquiries into every particular Person amongst you, and also by his Care and Industry hath instructed you all in Modesty and in the Doctrine which is according to Godliness. And he is abler than any one else to give such Account of those Works, (which by the assisting Power of God he hath perfected) as are answerable to the Works themselves. Indeed, our first and chief High-Priest saith, *What Things soever he seeth the Father do, these also doth the Son likewise.* But this Person, looking upon the first High-Priest as it were upon a Master, attentively, with the unpolluted Eyes of the Mind, whatsoever Things he seeth him do, them he makes Use of as
his

48 *An Historical Essay upon the*

his original Patterns, and hath wrought the Representations thereof into such a Form, that they do expresse (as near as 'tis possible to be done) an exact Likeness thereto. Being nothing inferiour to that *Besebel*, whom God himself (having fill'd him with the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, and of other artificial and skilful Knowledge) made Choice of to be the Framers of a Structure of Celestial Types of a Temple, by certain shadow'd Representations.

After the same Manner therefore this our Bishop, bearing in his Mind the perfect, whole, and entire Representation of Christ, who is the Word, the Wisdom, and the Light; it cannot be express'd with what a Greatness of Soul, with what a rich and inexhaustible Hand of his Understanding, and with what an emulous Liberality proceeding from you all, (who by your Nobleness in contributing to the Charge did most ambitiously contend, that you might in no wise seem to be inferior to his vast Design) he hath erected this magnificent Temple of the most high God, which may be seen naturally resembling (as near as may be) the Model of that more glorious Structure which is invisible.

And

Consecration of Churches. 49

And this very Place (for it is fit we should speak of this first) which, by the Treacheries of our Enemies, was overwhelm'd with all Manner of impure Rubbish, he neglected not; nor did he in the least yield to the Wickedness of them who had been Authors of it, when as he could have found out another Place (whereof there are great Numbers in this City) where he might have been eas'd of much of his Labour, and freed himself from many Troubles; yet having first made ready himself to undertake this Work, and afterwards corroborated all the People with an Alacrity of Mind, and gather'd them all together into one great Band, he attempted first this laborious Enterprize; supposing it fitting that this very Church (which had been most battered by the Enemies, which had heretofore undergone great Sufferings upon our Account, which had endur'd Persecutions both with and before us, which like a Mother was bereav'd of her Children) ought to enjoy, together with us, the magnificent Bounty of our most good and gracious God; for as much as the great Shepherd hath vouchsaf'd to gather his Children together again into one Place, having driven away the wild Beasts, Wolves, and all the savage and fierce kind of Creatures, and (as the divine

H Scrip-

Scriptures say) having broken the Jaw-Bones of the Lions, with good Reason he re-edify'd the Fold for his Flock, That he might put to Confusion the Enemy and the Avenger, and might bring a Reproach upon the audacious and rebellious Attempts of the Impious against God.

Now therefore these Persons, hated by God, after they had for a short Space of Time rais'd Disturbances, and were themselves also disturb'd, they suffer'd a most just Punishment, inflicted on them by divine Vengeance, and irrecoverably ruin'd themselves, their Friends, and Families. So that those Predictions heretofore recorded in the sacred Monuments of the Scriptures, may now be acknowledg'd to be really certain, in which the Word of God does both truly declare other Things, and also speaks exprelly concerning them thus: *The Ungodly have drawn out the Sword, they have bent their Bow, to cast down the Poor and Needy, and to slay such as are of an upright Conversation; their Sword shall go thro' their own Heart, and their Bows shall be broken. And again, Their Memorial perish'd with a Sound, and thou hast put out their Name for ever and ever; for when they were in Troubles they cry'd, and there was none to save them; even unto the Lord did they cry, but he heard them not. They were bound and fell, but*

H

we

we arose, and were set upright. This also, that was foretold in these Words, *Lord, thou in thy City shalt bring their Image to nought,* is manifested in the Sight of us all to be most true. These Men, who, like the Giants, rais'd a War against God, procur'd for themselves the same fatal End of their Lives, that they did. But She which was desolate, and whose Safety was despair'd of by all Men, has arriv'd at such a Conclusion of her patient Sufferings upon God's Account, as we now behold; so that these Words of the Prophecy of *Isaiah* may seem to have been spoken to her, *Rejoice, thou thirsty Desert, let the solitary Place rejoice and flourish like a Lilly; the Deserts shall flourish and be glad; be ye strengthen'd ye languid Hands and feeble Knees, be comforted ye faint-hearted, be strong, fear not, behold our God doth repay Judgment, and will repay it; he will come and save us, for, saith he, Water hath broke out in the Desert, and a Valley in a thirsty Land. The parched Ground shall be changed into moorish Places, and the Fountain of Water into a thirsty Land.* All this was formerly predicted in Words, and laid up in the sacred Books; but the Things themselves are now no longer deliver'd to us by Hear-say, but are exhibited by actual Performances. This same dry Desert, this *disconsolate Widow*, whose

52 *An Historical Essay upon the*

*very Gates they have cut down at once with Axes, like Wood in the Forest, having broken her in pieces with the Ax and the Hammer ; whose Books they have spoil'd, and have burnt the Sanctuary of God with Fire ; they have defiled the Dwelling-Place of his Name even unto the Ground ; whose Grapes all that go by plucked off, having first broken down her Hedges ; whom the wild Boar out of the Forest hath rooted up, and the wild Hog devoured ; by the miraculous Power of Christ (it having now pleased him so to do) flourisheth again like a Lilly. Yea, at such Time as she was chasten'd, that Chastisement was inflicted on her by his Appointment, as it were by a careful and indulgent Father ; for whom the Lord loveth he chastneth, and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth. When therefore She had been moderately and sufficiently chastis'd, she is again commanded from Heaven to rejoice, and she flourisheth as a Lilly, and breathes forth upon all Men a divine sweet Savour ; for, saith he, *Water gushed out in the Deserts*, to wit, the Fountain of that salutary Laver of divine Regeneration, and now that Land which a little before was desolate, is changed into Pools ; and the Fountain of living Water hath gushed out plentifully upon a thirsty Land.*

These

Consecration of Churches. 53

These Hands which were formerly weak are really strong, and these Works which you behold, are great and powerful Instances of this Strength of the Hands. Moreover, those Knees which were formerly enfeebled and weak, having now recover'd their usual Firmness and Faculty of Walking, go strait on in the divine Way of Knowledge of God, hastening toward the genuine Flock of that most good and gracious Shepherd. And if any of them have had their Souls benumm'd and stupify'd thro' the Menaces of Tyrants, even these the saving Word does not despise as incurable, but heals them carefully and tenderly, and excites them to be Partakers of the divine Constitution, saying, *Be comforted, ye faint-hearted, be strong, fear not.* When therefore this our new and excellent *Zorababel* (by the Acuteness of his Understanding) perceiv'd that, according as the divine Word had foretold, She which had been brought into Desolation for God's Sake, should enjoy these good Things, after that bitter Captivity and Abomination of Desolation, he despis'd not this dead Corpse, but having in the first Place with *Supplications* and *Prayers*, (together with the joint Consent of you all) propitiated the Father, and taking for his Assistant and Fellow-Labourer the only Reviver

Reviver of the Dead, he rais'd up this fallen Church, having first purify'd her, and healed her of her Maladies.

And now he hath put a Robe about her, not that old one, but such an one as he had again receiv'd Instructions about from the divine Oracles, which expressly testify thus, *And the latter Glory of this House shall far excel the former.* Upon which Account, having taken in a far larger Compass of Ground, he fortify'd the outward Circuit with a Wall on every Side, which might serve for a strong Fence to the whole Structure. Then he rais'd a spacious, lofty, and stately Portico against the Rays of the rising Sun, which, to those who stand at a sufficient Distance without the sacred Inclosure, does yield a full Prospect of this Structure within, and, as it were, attracts the Eyes of Infidels to look upon the first Entrances, that so no Person might pass by who should not feel some Pricks in his Mind, both at the Remembrance of the former Desolation, and also at the Sight of the stupendous Miracle of the present Fabrick. Hence he hoped, that he who upon that Account felt such a Compunction, might peradventure be drawn towards it, and at the very Sight thereof would be perswaded to enter in.

But

Consecration of Churches. 55

But after you are come within the Gates, he has not permitted you to enter immediately the Holy Place with impure and unwashen Feet; but having left a large Vacancy betwixt the Temple and the Portico, he beautify'd this vacant Place, having inclos'd it in the Figure of a Quadrangle, with four opposite Cloysters, supported on every Side with Pillars. The intermediate Space betwixt these Pillars he fill'd up with Partitions made of Wood, resembling Network, which reach'd up an indifferent Height; but the middle Space he left open, that a View of Heaven might be taken, and that by it might be let in the clear Air fill'd with the Rays of Light. Here also he plac'd the mysterious Symbols of the sacred Purgations, to wit, Fountains built opposite to the Front of the Church, which afforded Plenty of Water for those who enter'd the sacred Walls to wash in. And this first Place of Reception for those that enter'd, yielded both a beautiful and splendid Prospect to all Men, and also afforded a very commodious Mansion to those who yet wanted Instruction in the first Principles of Religion.

Moreover, after a View taken of those Buildings, he made Passages opening into the Church, adorn'd with a great many more inward Portico's. And again, at the Rays

Rays of the rising Sun he plac'd three Gates in one and the same Side. On the middlemost of which he thought fit to bestow much more of Magnificence and Spaciousness than on the other two plac'd on either Side of it; and having adorn'd it gloriously with Plates of Brasse bound on with Iron, and with Variety of Sculpture, he adjoyn'd the other two as the Guards to her, being as it were a Queen. When he had, after the same Manner, made the Number of the Porches equal to the Cloysters on both Sides of the whole Church, over these Porches he invented other copious Conveyances of Light into the House, and adorn'd them with various and exceeding fine and small wooden Sculptures. But the royal House it self he finish'd with richer and more costly Materials, liberally bestowing thereon most magnificent and vast Expences.

I think it here superfluous for me to describe the Length and Breadth of this Building, and to treat particularly of the Splendor of the Structure, of its unspeakable Greatness, of the glittering Show of the Works, of its Height, which equals Heaven, and of the costly Cedars of Libanus that are laid hereupon: The Mention of which even the holy Scriptures have not pass'd over in Silence, wherein

it

Consecration of Churches. 57

it is said, *The Trees of the Lord shall rejoice, even the Cedars of Libanus which he hath planted.* To what End should I make an exact Narration here of the most ingenious and artificial Composure of the whole Structure, and of the incomparable Beauty of every particular Part of it, when as the Testimony of the Eyes excludeth all Knowledge that entereth at the Ears? Moreover, after he had thus finish'd the Temple, and decently adorn'd it with the highest Thrones, in Honour of the Prelates of Churches, and also with Benches plac'd orderly all over the Church, at last, he plac'd the Holy of Holies, the Altar in the Midst; and that the Multitude might not come within these sacred Places, he inclos'd them with wooden Rails made like Network, which were so curiously and artificially fram'd and carv'd, that they entertain'd those that view'd them with a wonderful and surprizing Sight. Neither was the very Pavement neglected by him, but after he had beautify'd it most gloriously with Marble Stone, he proceeded to the Out-Buildings of the Temple, and with great Art and Skill erected a most spacious Baptistry and Consistory on each Side, which in an uniform Manner were join'd together at the Sides of the Cathedral, and

united

58 *An Historical Essay upon the*

united to the Doors which lead into the Middle of the Church.

These Buildings our most peaceful King *Solomon* (who erected the Temple of God) made for those who want the Purification and the Sprinkling by Water and the Holy Ghost. So that that Prophecy, before quoted, is no longer a verbal Prediction, but is really accomplish'd ; for now it is come to pass, that *the Glory of this latter House is truly greater than the former* ; for it was requisite and agreeable that (since her Pastor and Lord for her Sake once suffer'd Death, and after his Passion chang'd that vile Body, which for her Sake he had put on, into Brightness and Glory, and translated that very corruptible Flesh from Corruption to Immortality) she also should likewise enjoy the Dispensations of her Saviour : For altho' she (having receiv'd from him a Promise of far more excellent Things than she doth at present enjoy) incessantly longeth to be, for eternal Ages, Partaker of a far greater Glory of a Regeneration, at the Resurrection of the incorruptible Body, with the Choir of the Angels of Light, in the Palaces of God above the Heavens, together with *Jesus Christ*, the Donor of all good Things, and her Saviour ; yet, during the Interim of her Abode in this present World, she (who was
here-

Consecration of Churches. 59

heretofore a Widow and desolate) being by the Grace of God furrounded with these Flowers, is (as the Prophecy saith) truly become *like unto a Lilly*. And having put on her Wedding Robe, and being encircled with a Crown of Beauty, let us hear her herself relate how she is taught to dance, by *Esaias*, and with pleasant Expressions to shout forth Thanksgivings to her God and King; *Let my Soul rejoice in the Lord, for he hath clothed me with the Garment of Salvation and the Coat of Gladness. He hath encircled my Head with a Diadem like a Bridegroom, and hath bedeck'd me like a Bride with Ornaments; and as the Earth which multiplyeth its Flowers, and as a Garden that causeth its Seeds to spring forth, so the Lord hath caused Righteousness to rise up, and Joy in the Sight of all the Heathen. Thus doth she sing and dance.*

But in what Expressions the Bridegroom, the Celestial Word, *Jesus Christ* himself, answereth her, hear the Lord speaking: *Fear not, because thou hast been ignominiously treated, neither be thou ashamed, because thou hast suffer'd Reproach; for thou shalt forget thine everlasting Shame, and thou shalt no longer remember the Reproach of thy Widowhood; the Lord hath called thee, not as a Woman forsaken and dejected in Spirit, nor as a Woman hated*
I 2 from

60 *An Historical Essay upon the*

from thy Youth; thy God hath said, for a little while I have forsaken thee; but with great Compassion I will have Pity upon thee. I turned my Face from thee when I was a little angry, but with everlasting Mercy I will have Mercy upon thee, saith the Lord who hath redeemed thee. Arise, arise, thou who hast drunk from the Hand of the Lord the Cup of his Wrath, for thou hast drunk off and empty'd the Cup of Destruction, the Cup of my Fury; and there was none of all thy Sons whom thou hast born to comfort thee, neither was there any to take thee by the Hand: Behold, I have taken out of thy Hand the Cup of Destruction, the Cup of my Wrath, and thou shalt no longer drink it; and I will put it into the Hands of them that injur'd thee and debased thee. Arise, arise, put on Strength, put on thy Glory, shake off the Dust and arise, sit down, loose the Chain off thy Neck. Lift up thine Eyes round about, and view thy Children gather'd together; behold, they are gather'd together and come to thee. As I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt put them all on as an Ornament, and thou shalt put them about thee as a Bride doth her Bravery, for thy desolate Places, and those that were wasted and ruinous, shall now be too narrow for thy Inhabitants; and they shall be removed far from thee that devoured thee, for the Sons which thou hadst lost shall say in thine Ears, make

Consecration of Churches. 61

a Place for me that I may dwell; and thou shalt say in thine Heart, who hath begotten me these? I am childless, and a Widow; who hath nourish'd these for me? I was left desolate, these, where had they been? All this *Esaia*s hath predicted; these Things, in Times past, were recorded in the holy Scriptures concerning us; and it was requisite that we should now at length receive the Truth of these Words really and actually fulfill'd.

In regard therefore the Bridegroom, the *Word*, hath spoken in this Manner to his Spouse, the sacred and holy Church, agreeably hereto hath this Dresser of the Bride, (with the Prayers of you all in common, reaching out to her your helping Hands, by the Appointment of God the supreme King, and by the Appearance and Presence of *Jesus Christ's* Power) rais'd and erected this *desolate* Church, lying like a dead Carcass on the Ground, and despair'd of by all Men: And having lifted her up after this Manner, hath made her such an One as he was instructed to do by the Delineation of the sacred Scriptures. This Fabrick is indeed a stupendous Miracle, and doth surpass all the Degrees of Admirati^{on}, especially to them who are only intent upon the outward Appearance of Things.

But

But the original Examples and primitive Forms hereof, the spiritual and truly divine Patterns, are more admirable than all Miracles. I mean, the Reparations of that divine and rational Building in our Souls; which Structure, when the Son of God himself had fram'd according to his own Image, and had freely granted, that in all Parts it should bear the Resemblance of God, he bestow'd upon it a Nature incorruptible, incorporeal, rational, different from all Terrene Matter; and gave it a Substance originally and of it self intelligent: After he had once thus created it at the Beginning out of nothing, he made it a holy Spouse, and fram'd it into a most sacred Temple for himself and his Father. This he himself in express Words acknowledgeth, saying, *I will dwell in them, and walk amongst them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my People.* Such indeed is the perfect and purify'd Soul, which was so fram'd at the Beginning, that it bore the perfect Image of the celestial *Word*. But when thro' the Envy and Emulation of the malicious Devil, by its own voluntary Choice it began to be a Follower of its own Passions, and was enamour'd with Vice, (God having withdrawn himself out of it) being left destitute as it were of a Defender, it was easily captivated,
and

Consecration of Churches. 63

and remain'd expos'd to their Treacheries, who for a long Time had been Enviars of his Glory; and being now utterly batter'd down by the Engines and Machines of its invisible Adversaries and spiritual Enemies, it sunk down into such a total Ruin, that not one Stone of Virtue was left standing upon another; all the Parts of it lay prostrate on the Ground, as dead, utterly depriv'd of all those Notions concerning God which were naturally imprint-ed on it.

But this ruined Building, which was framed after the Image of God, was not laid waste by that wild Boar out of the Wood which is visible to our Eyes, but by some destructive Devil, and by intelligent and spiritual wild Beasts; who having put it into a Flame by wicked Passions, (as it were with the fiery Darts of their Malice) have burnt with Fire the truly divine Sanctuary of God, and destroy'd the Tabernacle of his Name, even to the Ground. Afterwards they buried it (miserable Wretch!) under a vast heap of Earth which they cast up, and reduc'd it to an utter Despair of all manner of Safety. But its Patron, the divine and salutary Word, (obeying the Love of his most gracious Father shown towards Mankind)

64 *An Historical Essay upon the*

Mankind) restor'd it again, after it had suffer'd condign Punishment for its Sins.

In the first Place, therefore, having united to himself the Minds of the Emperors, by Means of those most pious Princes he cleansed the whole World from all impious and pernicious Men, and also from those cruel and barbarous Tyrants hated of God. Afterwards he brought to Light Men very well known to him, Persons that heretofore had been *consecrated* Priests to him for ever, and were secretly conceal'd and secur'd by his Defence during the Storm of Persecution, whom, agreeable to their Deserts, he honoured with the magnificent Gifts of the Spirit; by these Men he hath again purified and cleansed (by their poinant and comprehensive Preaching of the divine Precepts, as it were with Shovels and Spades) these Souls, which a little before were defiled and totally covered over with all manner of Filthiness and Heaps of impious Injunctions. And when he had made the Place of all your Minds bright and clear, he deliver'd them up to this most prudent *Prelate*, most acceptable to God, who being a Man endowed with great Judgment and Reason in other Things, and also most acute in discerning and distinguishing the Disposition

Consecration of Churches. 65

sition of the Souls allotted to his Care, from the very first Day (as I may say) even to this present he hath not ceased to build; cementing together in you all, one while glistering Gold, at other times purify'd and try'd Silver, and precious and rich Stones. So that by his Works towards you he hath again compleated the sacred and mystical Prophecy, the Words whereof are these; *Behold I prepare Carbuncle for thy Store, and Saphire for thy Foundation, and for thy Bulwarks Jasper, and for thy Gates Stones of Chrystal, and for thy Wall choice Stones, and all thy Children shall be taught of God, and great shall be the Peace of thy Children, and thou shalt be built in Righteousness.* He therefore, building in Righteousness, hath aptly and fitly differenc'd the Strength of all the People. Some he hath inclosed with the outward Wall only, that is, he hath fortify'd them round with an unerring strong Faith; of this Sort there is a great Multitude who cannot bear a more excellent Structure. To others he committeth the Custody of the Entrances into the Temple, giving them in Command to watch at the Gates, and to conduct those in that come thither; these may fitly be compar'd to the Porches of the Temple: Othersome he hath set

K

to

to support the chief Pillars which are without, about the Court quadrangularwise, bringing them within the first Bolts of the literal Sense of the four Gospels. Some he hath also placed about the Sanctuary, on both Sides; these are such as are *Catechumens* as yet, and do make a good Progress and Increase in the Faith, but yet they are not far from inspecting those most secret Mysteries, which Privilege only the perfect Believers do enjoy. Out of this Number he hath taken those whose immaculate Souls have been purified like Gold in the sacred Laver; some of whom he hath set to support Pillars far more noble than those outward ones, even the most intricate and mysterious Sentences of sacred Scripture; others of them he illuminateth to be as it were Windows to transmit Light into the Temple. He hath also beautified the Temple with one stately *Portico*, that is, with the glorious Worship of the One and Only God, the supreme King.

But that Region above the Heavens, and the Things there, which are the Original of what we here behold, that *Jerusalem* which is Above, that celestial Mount *Sion*, and that City of the living God, far above the World, in which
are

Consecration of Churches: 67

are innumerable Companies of Angels, and the Church of the First-born which are written in Heaven, who with Praises unutterable, which we cannot understand, laud their Creator and supreme Prince, the Blessedness of this Region, I say, no Mortal is able deservedly to set forth; *For the Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither have entered into the Heart of Man the Things that God hath prepared for them that love him.* Of which Things, since we are now vouchsafed to be Partakers in Part, let us, both Men, Women, and Children, small and great, all together, with one Spirit and one Soul, never cease to give Thanks and Praise to the Author of these our so great good Things: *Who hath Mercy on all our Iniquities and healeth all our Infirmities, who redeemeth our Life from Destruction, and crowneth us with Mercy and loving Kindness; who filleth our Desire with good Things, for he hath not dealt with us according to our Sins, neither hath he rewarded us according to our Iniquities; for as far as the East is from the West, so far hath he removed our Sins from us; as a Father pitieth his own Children, even so is the Lord merciful to them that fear him.* Keeping these Things fresh in our Memories, both now and throughout all succeed-

68 *An Historical Essay upon the*

ing Times, and moreover setting before the Eyes of our Minds, God, the Cause of this present Day's *Solemnity*, and the Master of this *Feast*, both Day and Night, every Hour, and, as I may say, every Moment wherein we fetch our Breath, let us love him and worship him with all the Strength of our Souls,

And let us now rise up, and with the loud Voice of our Affection beseech him, that he would continually save and defend us within his Sheepfold, and that he would afford us his everlasting Peace entire and immoveable in *Jesus Christ* our Saviour, by whom be Glory to him throughout all Ages, *Amen.*



CHAP.



C H A P. VI.

The Form and Solemnity of the Consecration of the Martyrium at Jerusalem, built by Constantine over the Sepulchre of our Saviour.



USEBIUS (who is not without Cause supposed to be the Author of the *Panegyrick* to *Paulinus*) has, in his History of the Life of *Constantine*, given a particular Account of a stately Church at *Jerusalem*, built by the Emperor over the *Sepulchre* of our *Saviour*, which was dedicated with singular Magnificence and Veneration; and for the greater Honour, by his *Imperial* Letters he summoned the Bishops, who from all Parts of the *East* were then met in Convocation at *Tyre*, to be present and assisting at the Solemnity. The Rites and Ceremonies used at these *Dedications*, were a great Confluence of Bishops and Strangers from all Parts, the Performance of Divine Offices, singing of Hymns and Psalms, reading

ing and expounding of the Scriptures, Sermons, and Orations, receiving the holy Sacrament, Prayers, and Thanksgivings, liberal Alms bestow'd on the Poor, and great Donations given to the Church, and, in short, mighty Expressions of mutual Amity, and Kindness, and universal Rejoycings with one another. But the Words of the *Historian* will set this Solemnity in the best Light, which, translated, run thus:

“ The Great *Constantine*, upon some Con-
 “ tentions in the Churches of *Egypt*, issu-
 “ ed out a *Royal Writ*, that a *Convocation*
 “ of the *Prelates* of all *Egypt* and *Lybia*, *A-*
 “ *sia* and *Europe*, should meet at *Tyre*, to de-
 “ termine the Controversy (*k*). After these
 “ Orders had been effectually put in Ex-
 “ ecution, another Messenger from the
 “ Emperor arriv'd, who, having brought
 “ an *Imperial Letter*, mov'd the Synod,
 “ that without any Delay they would
 “ forthwith hasten their Journey to *Je-*
 “ *rusalem*, in order to celebrate the So-
 “ lemnity of the *Dedication* of the *Mar-*
 “ *tyrium*, a magnificent Church that he
 “ had built over the holy *Sepulchre* of
 “ our Saviour. All of them therefore
 “ left the Province of the *Phœnicians*,
 “ and, by the Assistance of the *Cursus*
 “ *Publicus*, went whither they had re-
 “ ceiv'd

(*k*) Euseb. de Vit. Con. l. 4. c. 43.

Consecration of Churches. 71

“ceiv’d Orders to go. At which Time
“that whole Place was fill’d with a nu-
“merous divine Assembly, the eminent
“Bishops out of every Province having
“met together at *Jerusalem*. For the
“*Macedonians* had sent the Bishop of the
“*Metropolis* among them, and the *Pan-*
“*nonii* and *Mæsi* had directed thither the
“choicest Flower of God’s Youth in
“their Country. There was likewise
“present the Ornament of the *Persian*
“Bishops, an holy Person, and one that
“was incomparably well vers’d in the
“divine Oracles. The *Bithynians* also,
“and *Thracians*, by their own Presence
“adorn’d the Convention : Nor were
“the most eminent of the Bishops among
“the *Cilicians* absent. Those of *Cappa-*
“*docia* likewise, who excell’d for Learn-
“ing and Eloquence, shin’d in the midst
“of this Congress. Moreover, all *Syria*
“and *Mesopotamia*, *Phœnice* and *Arabia*,
“together with *Palestine* it self, *Egypt*
“also, and *Lybia*, and those who inha-
“bit the Country of *Thebais*, all met to-
“gether, and fill’d up that great Choir
“of God. There was present, together
“with all these Persons, an *Imperial At-*
“tendance, the *Palatine Soldiers*, who
“were to obey the Commands of the *Bi-*
“*shops* ; and from the *Imperial Palace* it
“self approv’d Men were sent, who,
“with

“ with Expences furnish’d by the Empe-
 “ ror, might support the Festivity.

“ But over all these there was appoint-
 “ ed, as Chief, a Person highly accepta-
 “ ble and useful to the Emperor, one
 “ that was eminent for his Faith, Reli-
 “ gion, and Skill in the sacred Scriptures;
 “ who having been famous for his Con-
 “ fessions in Defence of Piety during the
 “ Times of the Tyrants, was deservedly
 “ entrusted with the Ordering of these
 “ Matters. This Person, therefore, with
 “ all imaginable Sincerity, paid Obedi-
 “ ence to the Emperor’s Commands, and
 “ honour’d the Synod with a most cour-
 “ teous Reception, entertaining them
 “ with splendid *Feasts* and *Banquets*. But
 “ amongst the Indigent and Naked, and
 “ amongst infinite Multitudes of Poor of
 “ both Sexes, who stood in great Need
 “ of Food and other Necessaries, he di-
 “ stributed vast Quantities of *Money*, and
 “ a great Number of *Garments*. Lastly,
 “ he variously adorn’d the whole Church
 “ with *magnificent* and *royal sacred Gifts*,
 “ (1), and beautify’d it throughout with
 “ a Furniture that was Magnificent and
 “ truly *Imperial*; he adorn’d it likewise
 “ in a various Manner with inexpressible
 “ Ornaments of innumerable *consecrated*
 “ Dona-

(1) Euseb. de Vit. Con, l. 4. c. 45.

Consecration of Churches. 73

"Donations, consisting of Gold, Silver,
 "and precious Stones:
 "(m) But the Ministers of God a-
 "dorn'd the *Festival* partly with their
 "Prayers, and partly by their Discourses;
 "for some of them with Praises cele-
 "brated the Benignity of the Religious
 "Emperor towards the universal Savi-
 "our, and in their Orations set forth the
 "Magnificence of the *Martyrium*. Others
 "entertain'd their Hearers with Theolo-
 "gick Discourses upon the divine *Dog-*
 "*mata* fitted to the present Solemnity,
 "as with some splendid Banquet of rati-
 "onal Good. Others interpreted the
 "Lessons of the divine Volumes, and dis-
 "clos'd the mystick Meanings. But such
 "as were unable to arrive at these
 "Things, appeas'd the Deity with un-
 "bloody Sacrifices and mystick Immola-
 "tions, humbly offering up their Prayers
 "to God for the common Peace, for the
 "Church of God, for the Emperor him-
 "self who was the Occasioner of such
 "great Blessings, and for his pious Chil-
 "dren. Thus was the *Feast of Dedic-*
 "*ation* celebrated with the greatest Joy
 "imaginable, on the very *Tricennalia* of
 "the Emperor."

Thus far the Historian; from whose
 Account of the *Consecration of Churches*

(m) Euseb. de Vit. Con. l. 3. c. 46.

we are made acquainted with many primitive Customs, and with the Ceremonies that were used in those early Ages at the Celebration of this *ancient Rite*; some of which, perhaps, may be overlook'd in the Course of Reading, and therefore I shall collect the most remarkable, and offer them at one View.

The Emperors, as soon as they embrac'd the Christian Faith, we perceive, were continually enacting Laws for the Defence of Religion, and the Protection of its Professors; the Civil Magistrate was thought to have a Power over the Conscience; the *Clergy* were the greatest Favourites in the *Court*, and the *Bishops* often tasted of the *Royal Bounty*, by large and noble Presents in the most magnificent Manner.

At the *Consecration* of Churches, it was not thought of State enough for the Bishop of the *Diocese* alone to perform this Ceremony, but he was attended by a great Number of *other Bishops* to grace the Solemnity.

The Gifts of *Plate* and *Vestments*, that were bestow'd upon the Churches, were likewise *set apart* to holy Use by a formal *Consecration*.

Eusebius, in his *Panegyrick*, takes a particular Care to let his Auditors know, how the Church of *Tyre* had been profan'd

Consecration of Churches. 75

fan'd and laid in Ruins by the Persecutors of the Christian Name, and that *Paulinus*, with the Contributions of other Bishops, had rais'd it again: This Church, it is not to be question'd, was *consecrated* at its *first* Erection; but upon its Profanation by the Heathens, it was thought decent, before the divine Offices were perform'd in it, to *renew the Rite*, and *solemnly to purge* the Structure. This Practice seems to be of Force to prove, That Churches built upon *old Foundations* ought to be *consecrated again*; and, in my Opinion, it highly upbraids the Neglect of our Bishops at the Restoration, who receiv'd our Cathedral and Parochial Churches (turn'd into Barracks and Stables, and polluted with the Filth, Vermin, and Debauchery of Military Villains) out of the Hands of Calvinists and Infidels, and yet never, as I have heard, purify'd those Structures by a *second Consecration*. Whether it was a Neglect of the same Nature in the Age that follow'd to make Chapels of Dissenting Conventicles without ever consecrating them at all, is not properly within my Province to enquire.

The Churches of the *primitive* Christians were very Spacious and Magnificent, adorn'd with a great deal of *Sculpture*, beautify'd with Plates of polish'd Brasses, cover'd with Cedar, and pav'd with Marble.

ble. They were enclos'd with a Wall as a Defence for the Structure, and the Altar was surrounded with wooden Rails, to keep off the Vulgar, and guard against Irreverence; a Custom, tho' with some Difficulty, still preserv'd among us.

The Charge of the Consecrations was generally upon the Emperors, who, over and above, made most sumptuous *Entertainments* for the Bishops and the People, and presented very noble Donations, to shew the Value they had for Religion and for the Ornament of God's House. There was an *Imperial Guard* to attend the Bishops, and to honour and protect the Solemnity.

"Thus we see, says Mr. Hooker (n), "That
 " whether *Emperors* or *Bishops*, in those
 " Days, were *Church-Founders*, the solemn
 " *Dedication* of *Churches* they thought
 " not to be a Work in it self either vain
 " or *superstitious*. Can we judge it a
 " Thing seemly for any Man to go about
 " the Building of an House to the God
 " of Heaven, with no other Apparance,
 " than if his End were to rear up a *Kit-*
 " *chen* or *Parlour* for his own Use? Or
 " when a Work of such Nature is finish'd,
 " remaineth there nothing but presently
 " to use it, and so an End? It behoveth,
 " that the Place where God shall be
 " serv'd

• (n) Hook. Ecc. Pol. l. 5. sect. 12.

Consecration of Churches. 77

“serv’d by the whole Church be a publick Place, for the avoiding of *privy Conventicles*, which, cover’d with *Pre-
tence of Religion*, may serve unto dangerous Practices. There are which hold, that the Presence of a *Christian Multitude*, and the Duty of Religion perform’d amongst them, do make the Place of their Assembly *Publick*, even as the Presence of the King and his Retinue maketh any Man’s House a Court. But this I take to be an Error, in as much as the only Thing which makes any Place publick, is the *publick Assignment* thereof unto such Duties. As for the Multitude there assembled, or the Duties which they perform, it doth not appear, how either should be of Force to infuse any such Prerogative. Nor doth the solemn *Dedication of Churches* serve only to make them *Publick*, but further also to surrender up that Right which otherwise the *Founders* might have in them, and to make God himself their *Owner*.”

CHAP.



C H A P. VII.

Some Authorities of later Ages collected; with the Decrees of two Councils, one held at Winchester, the other at London, relating to the Consecration of the English Churches.

THE Consecrations of the Church at Tyre and the Martyrium at Jerusalem, is sufficient, one would think, to illustrate and defend the Use of this Rite, with Persons who bear the least Deference to Antiquity, or the Practice of the first Christians; but I shall now, over and above, enquire into some other Evidences, and likewise see what Reception this Ceremony has met with in much later Ages.

And among the best Authorities, I shall rank the great *Athanasius*, who speaks of a Church not consecrated, and prays, that the Emperor may live to see it done, and celebrate the Ceremonies; a Solemnity esteem'd so necessary in those early Times, that

Consecration of Churches. 79

that the *Arians* charg'd it as a grievous Crime upon *Athanasius*, that he celebrated the holy *Mysteries* in the great Church before it was consecrated; for which he thus apologizes to the angry Emperor (o), That indeed he did not celebrate the *Dedication* of this Church, which he could not do without Order from the Emperor; but he confesses, That he did celebrate there the divine *Mysteries* before its *Consecration*: He excuses himself upon the Account of the great Concourse of People that came to *Alexandria* upon *Easter-Day*, and says, "That the old Churches were small and few in Number, and that the People demanded earnestly to assemble in the *Great Church* there to make Prayers for the Safety of the Emperor; he used much Intreaty, but in vain, that they would delay it, and rather assemble, tho' with some Inconvenience, in the other Churches; and they would not obey him, but, on the contrary, were ready to go out of *Alexandria* to keep their Assembly in the Fields: That this was the Reason which oblig'd him to celebrate in the *Great Church* before it was consecrated, which he did so much the rather, because, during the Fast of *Lent*, many Persons had been hurt in
" the

(o) Athan. Apol. ad Imp. Constantium.

80 *An Historical Essay upon the*

"the Press of the People." So heinous was the Offence of celebrating the holy Mysteries in a Church *unconsecrated*; tho' now it is become of small Importance, and we have the divine Services perform'd without Scruple in *unblessed* Places, and even the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper administer'd in many *Chapels* about this City, that were never (as I understand) set apart by the Rite of *Consecration*.

The like undeniable Evidence we have for the *Western Churches*, there being a Sermon of *St. Ambrose*, entitled, *De Dedicacione Basilicae*, preach'd at the Dedication of a Church built by *Vitalianus* and *Majanus*, the Ground of his Discourse taken from the good *Centurion*, of whom the *Jews* told our Saviour in *St. Luke's Gospel*, that he loved their Nation, and had built them a *Synagogue*. The same Father, writing to his Sister, speaks of a Church which himself had consecrated, *Nam cum Basilicam dedicassent, &c.* and writing unto *Felix Bishop of Cumo*, invites him to the *Consecration* of a Church built by one *Bassianus*, requiring him not to fail of being there, because he had promis'd for him.

The

Consecration of Churches. 81

The Council of *Cæsar Augusta*, held in the latter End of the fifth Century (*p*), has ordain'd, in the third *Canon*, " That if "*Arian* Bishops, who are not converted, "*shall consecrate Churches*, they shall be "*consecrated* anew by the *Catholick* Bishop. So careful and exact was the Church in the celebrating of this Rite, that the Bishop officiating must be found in the Faith, no *Heretick*, or Favourer of *Schism*, or Breaker of the *Publick Unity*. If so much as the *Consecration* of a Church by an *Arian Bishop* was invalid, how would the Members of that *Council*, if they were now alive, abhor and loath the Sight of our *Churches*, where the *Arian Doctrines* are publickly founded forth without Censure, and are even caress'd and become fashionable ?

St. Gregory, in the sixth Century, in several Letters gives his Opinion thus concerning the *Consecration* of Churches; When he gave Commission to Bishops to *consecrate* Oratories and Churches, the chief Thing that he recommended to them was, " To take Care that no dead "*Body* were bury'd in the Place. — "*If* a Bishop *consecrated* an Oratory in "*another Diocese*, he declares, that what "*he* had done was null and void. — "*The Pagan Temples* must be *consecrated*
M " with

(p) *Du Pin's Church History.*

82 *An Historical Essay upon the*

“ with holy Water, after the Idols were
 “ destroy’d. — He would not have a
 “ new Church *consecrated*, unless it were
 “ endow’d with a sufficient Revenue for
 “ maintaining divine Service and the
 “ Clergy.”

Avitus, Bishop of *Vienna*, in the sixth Century, in his five and twentieth Letter, promises his Brother *Apollinaris* to be present at the *Dedication* of a Church, and commends the charitable Gifts that were design’d for the Poor at this *Feast*.

The third Canon of the Council of *Worms*, in the ninth Century, ordains,
 “ That a Bishop shall not require any Pre-
 “ sent for the Consecration of Churches.”

In a Council held at *Winchester*, 1076, *Lanfranc*, Archbishop of *Canterbury*, caus’d divers Canons to be drawn up, to regulate the Discipline of the Church, one of which was, “ That *divine Service* shall not
 “ be perform’d in Churches till they be
 “ *consecrated* by the Bishops.”

In the thirteenth Century, *Henry the Third* of *England*, sent for Cardinal *Otho*, Legate of the *Holy See*, who held a Council at *London*, and propos’d many Decrees, the first of which concerns the *Dedication of Churches*, and implies, That it deriv’d its Original from the *Old Testament*, and has been observ’d by holy Fathers
 under

Consecration of Churches: 83

under the *New* ; that it ought to be solemniz'd with greater Dignity and Care, since then they only offer'd Sacrifices of *dead Beasts*, whereas now they offer on the Altar, by the Hands of the Priest, a *living* and true Sacrifice, namely, the only Son of God : Therefore the Fathers have, with Reason, order'd that so *sublime* an Office should be celebrated only in *consecrated Places*, at least when no Necessity requires it to be done elsewhere. Having, therefore, seen and understood that a great many despise or neglect this sacred Ministry, and having met with a great many Churches, even Cathedrals, which, tho' ancient, have not yet been *consecrated* with Holy Oyl, to remedy this Neglect, they order that all *Cathedral, Conventual, and Parochial* Churches, which are compleatly built, shall be *consecrated* within Two Years by the *Diocesan* Bishops, or by their Authority ; and the same Time is prescrib'd for those that shall be built hereafter ; and that this Statute may be observ'd, they prohibit the Celebration of Mass in those Churches, which shall not be *consecrated* within two Years after they shall be built.

Near the End of the Reign of *Henry the Eighth*, the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church were brought under a Re-

84 *An Historical Essay upon the*

view, (q) and a *Rationale* drawn up, to explain the Meaning and the Signification of them; I shall give the Reader a Transcript of as much of it as relates to our Purpose. The Preamble (which admirably expresses the present Sentiments of the Church of *England*) runs thus;

“ Tho’ it be very Truth, that there is
 “ a great Difference betwixt the Com-
 “ mandments and Works express’d by
 “ *Scripture*, and *Rites* and *Ceremonies* de-
 “ vis’d by Men; because the Works con-
 “ tain’d in *Scripture* are the express
 “ Commandments of God, which may not
 “ be infring’d, taken away, or chang’d
 “ by any Man; and the other said *Rites*
 “ and *Ceremonies* are appointed and or-
 “ dain’d by Man, which upon Causes
 “ reasonable may from Time to Time
 “ by Governors and Men of Authority
 “ be alter’d and chang’d; yet such Or-
 “ dinances, *Rites*, and *Ceremonies*, de-
 “ vis’d by such as are in Authority, for
 “ a *decent Order*, *Quietness*, and *Tranqui-*
 “ *lity*, ought (all Abuses and Superstition
 “ clearly taken away) to be with all *revere-*
 “ *rent Obedience* observ’d by the People,
 “ not as Works or Workers for their Salva-
 “ tion, but as *Godly Policies and Ordinances*,
 “ made and devis’d by Christian Go-
 “ vernors to the Intent (as *St. Paul*
 “ faith,

(q) Collier’s *Ecc. Hist.* Vol. 2. p. 191.

Consecration of Churches. 85

“ faith, *Cor. i. 14.*) that Things should
“ be done in a Christian Congregation
“ with an *honest Reverence* and *decent Or-*
“ *der*: And therefore, to the End that
“ this *Church of England* may be come-
“ ly and quietly order’d, and well in-
“ structed, it is thought meet and con-
“ venient that the Orders, Ceremonies,
“ and Rites following, should be in the
“ same Church honestly, *obediently*, and
“ *reverently* kept and observ’d.

The CHURCH.

“ And first of all, To have a common
“ House for Christian People, which we
“ call the *Church*, is very necessary, that
“ there they may come together, where
“ the Word of God is preach’d, the
“ Sacraments are minister’d, and Prayers
“ as well of the People as the Minister,
“ to Almighty God are made; where-
“ fore ’tis convenient that Place and the
“ Altars there be *sanctify’d*, *wash’d*, and
“ *prepar’d with Prayers*.

“ *Sanctify’d*; that is to say, *separated*
“ from all *profane* Uses, and *dedicated*
“ to the End before rehears’d. And
“ therefore no Christian Person should
“ abuse the same, either by Eating, Drink-
“ ing, Buying, Selling, Playing, Danc-
“ ing, Dicing, or with any other pro-
“ fane

86 *An Historical Essay upon the*

“fane or worldly Matter. For all
“Soberness, Quietness, and Godliness
“ought there to be used.

“*Wash’d*; to admonish all Christian
“People to wash inwardly their own
“Hearts and Consciences, which be the
“living Temples of God, before they
“shall approach to the Use of any Ho-
“ly Mystery there.

“*Prepar’d with Prayers*; that the Sa-
“craments there minister’d may be ac-
“ceptable to Almighty God; and that
“it may please him to hear the hum-
“ble and devout Prayers of his People
“there, and that all Things there done
“and heard by them may be to the
“Commodity and Wealth of their Souls.

The CHURCH-YARD.

“And albeit that a glorious Sepul-
“ture, is not profitable to the wicked
“Man, and an evil Sepulture hurts not
“the good Man, yet to put us in Re-
“membrance of *Death*, that we may
“leave Sin and Wickedness, and to testify
“our Faith and Hope of the Resurre-
“ction of our Bodies, therefore ’tis con-
“venient that the *Church-yard*, for a
“Place of common Burial for Christian
“People, should be *sanctify’d* and *hallow-*
“*ed*; and if it chances the same to be
“*polluted*

Consecration of Churches. 87

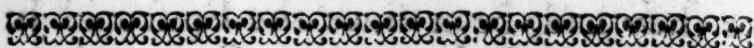
"polluted we think it convenient to be
"reconcil'd again.

In the Sixth of *Edward the Sixth*, in Order that consecrated Places should not be profan'd by Fighting and Quarrelling, as they had been since the Episcopal Jurisdiction and the ancient Ceremonies of the Church were lessen'd in Authority and Reputation, to that End it was enacted in Parliament; That (r) if any Person whatsoever, after the first Day of May then next following, should quarrel, chide, or brawl in any Church or Church-Yard, he should be suspended ab ingressu Ecclesiæ, if he were a Lay-Man, and from his Ministration if he were a Priest. That if any Person, after that Time, should smite or lay violent Hands upon another, he should be deemed to be Excommunicate ipso Facto, and be excluded from the Fellowship and Company of Christ's Congregation; and, finally, that if any Person should strike another with any Weapon in the Church or Church-Yard, or draw his Sword with an Intent to strike another with the same, and thereof be lawfully convicted, he should be punish'd with the Loss of one of his Ears. A seasonable Severity, says the *Historian*, and much conducing to the Honour both of Church and State.

And

(r) Heylin's *Hist. of the Reform.*

And thus I end the Authorities I have collected to vindicate and explain the Use and the Form of the *Consecration* of Churches among *Christians*.



C H A P. VIII.

The Magnificence, the Ornaments, and the Form of the first Churches among Christians; and the Reason of distinguishing them by the Name of our Saviour, of the Virgin Mary, of Angels, Saints, Martyrs, &c.



I cannot be suppos'd that in the early Ages of the Gospel, when the Estates of Christians were oppress'd with the *Avarice* and heavy *Tyranny* of the Persecutors, but their *Churches* and Places of publick Worship were mean and almost *unadorn'd*, suitable to their Fortunes; the Professors of Religion consulted more the Security than the Stateliness of their *Temples*, least by expending too much in Ornament, they should draw upon themselves the *Envy* and the Ravage of their Enemies; yet in the more early Times, when the

Fury

Consecration of Churches. 89

Fury and Fierceness of the *Pagan* Powers kept them low, they *beautify'd* their Oratories and Places of Worship; especially if we may believe the Author of the *Dialogue* in *Lucian*, (who lived within the first Age) who bringing in one *Critias* that was persuaded by the *Christians*, to go to the Place of their Assembly, (which by his Description seems to have been an *Upper-Room*) tells us, that after they had gone up several Stairs they came at last into a Room that was overlaid with Gold, where he beheld nothing but a Company of Persons with their Bodies bow'd down and pale Faces. I know the Design of the *Dialogue* is to abuse and deride the *Christians*, but there is no Reason to believe the Author invented those Circumstances, which could make nothing at all to his Purpose.

But when the *Civil Power* came into the Faith, and protected the *Christians* in their Worship, they had no longer Recourse to *Dens*, and *Caves*, and *Upper-Rooms*, but they set about the Foundation of Churches in the most solemn Manner; the Contributions of *Christians* being cheerful and liberal, even to a Magnificence comparable to that of the *Jewish* Princes towards the Building of *Solomon's Temple*; the Splendor and Ornament of their Churches encreas'd, according

according to the Entertainment Christianity met with, till the Empire becoming Christian, their Temples rose up into *Grandeur* and *Gallantry*, as *Eusebius* has told us of the Church at *Tyre*, which we perceive was incomparably sumptuous and magnificent. From this Time the Christians spar'd no Cost to *adorn* their Churches, the Fabrick was most *Noble*, the *Ornaments* within suitable to the outward *Beauties*, the *Altars* furnish'd with rich *Plate*, even to the Envy and Astonishment of the spiteful *Gentiles*; insomuch that *Felix*, a Proconsul, in the Time of *Julian* the Apostate, a little after the middle of the following Century, when the Churches were given up to Spoil and Sacrilege, cryed out upon the Sight, *Behold in what rich Vessels they administer to Jesus the Son of Mary!*

How fordid now appear the lurking Conventicles of the *Puritan*? Who creeps into *dark Lanes* and *Allies*, as if Religion (even in this Reign of Liberty) were under the Iron Hands of Persecution, and he thought it meritorious to offer to his God of that which cost him nothing. The Primitive *Christians* thought no Expende too dear to testify their Veneration and Esteem for their Holy Faith, and, even in the most difficult Times, when their Assemblies were confin'd to
Chambers

Consecration of Churches. 91

Chambers and private *Rooms*, those *Apartments* were solemnly *Consecrated*, and devoted to the *Offices* of Religion, and never again *unballow'd* by vulgar and *Domestick* Uses; but our *Sectarists* (the profess'd *Enemies* of *Antiquity* and *Primitive Practice*) strive to debase the *Dignity* of Religion, and assemble in *Places*, that (no question) have too often serv'd the *Ends* of *Luxury* and *Intemperance*. How much it is for the *Reputation* of this *Protestant City* to *Lett out* the publick *Halls* of their *Companies* to such *Guests* I shall at present leave undetermin'd.

“ It is easy to note (says Bishop Hall (s))
 “ how the Extreme of *superstitious* Cu-
 “ riosity hath crept into the Church of
 “ *Rome*, insomuch that it may well vye
 “ with the *Jewish* for Niceness and Mul-
 “ titude of Observances; a just Volume
 “ would not contain the curious Scr-
 “ ples of their nice Observances in their
 “ Vestments, Consecrations, Sacramental
 “ Rites, and indeed in the whole Carriage
 “ of their Religious Devotions; but sure-
 “ ly I fear they are not more faulty in
 “ the *one* Extreme than many *Christians*
 “ are in the *other*, who place a *Kind of*
 “ *Holiness* in a *slovenly Neglect*; who are
 “ apt to *biggle with the Almighty*, and in
 “ a base *Niggardliness* pinch him in the

N 2

“ Allow-

(s) *Bishop Hall's Remains.*

“ Allowances of his Service. Wise Chri-
 “ tians sit down in the *Mean*, now un-
 “ der the Gospel, avoiding a *careless* and
 “ *parsimonious* Neglect on the one Side,
 “ and a *superstitious Slovenliness* on the
 “ other; the painted Looks and lasciv-
 “ ious Gaudiness of the Church upon
 “ the Hills, and the *careless neglected*
 “ *Dress* of some Churches in the Vally.

Many are the Objections against the
 Magnificence and Ornaments of Churches;
 but (says Mr. (t) *Hooker*) “ has God any
 “ where reveal’d that it is his Delight
 “ to dwell *Beggarly*, that he takes no
 “ Pleasure to be worship’d only in *poor*
 “ *Cottages*? Was not he most acceptably
 “ honour’d, when the *Stateliest* Places
 “ and Things in the whole World were
 “ sought out to *adorn* his Temple? Dost
 “ thou build a Church in a City?
 “ let it exceed the most magnificent *Pa-*
 “ *laces* in that City; in a *Village*? let
 “ it equal, nay excel all the *Houses* of
 “ the Village; because nothing is worthy
 “ of God, but what is the *best* and the
 “ most *excellent* in its Kind; *The House*
 “ *which I build*, says *Solomon* to *Hiram*,
 “ is *great*, hear the Reason, *because great*
 “ *is our God above all Gods*. *The Work*
 “ (of building the Temple) is *great*, says
 “ *David*,

(t) Eccl. Pol. B. 5.

Consecration of Churches. 93

"David, and why? For the Palace is
"not for Man, but for the Lord God.

The *Ornaments* and *Decorations* that were bestow'd by the *Primitive Christians* upon their Churches were solemnly Noble; they had fix'd *Altars* of polish'd *Marble*, compass'd in with *Rails*, to fence off Rudeness and *Irreverence*; and Persons regarded them with mighty *Veneration* and *Respect*, which soon grew so high, that they became *Asylums* and *Refuges*, to protect *innocent* Persons and unwary *Offenders* from immediate *Violence* and *Oppression*. Their Churches were set off with the greatest *Variety* of *Sculpture* and *Imagery*, the Use of which was merely *Historical*, to add some *Beauty*, *Ornament*, and *Solemnity* to the Place, which After-ages unhappily improv'd into *Superstition* and *Idolatry*. How far short of the *Primitive Pattern* are our *Modern Churches*? These innocent *Ornaments* of *Art* and *Piety* are thought to smell strong of *Popery*, and even the *History* of *Scripture* upon *painted Glass* is *Superstition*. No *Images* but of *Lions* and *Unicorns* are now the *Embellishments* of our Churches, and the *Arms* of the *Civil Magistrate* may stand with *Applause*, where the *Cross*, the *Arms* of our *Crucify'd Saviour*, (if we believe the *Calvinist*)

94 *An Historical Essay upon the*
ist) must be defaced as *Popish* and *Ido-*
latrous.

The *Form* of the Primitive Churches was for the most Part *Oblong*, to keep the better Correspondence with the Fashion of a *Ship*, the common Notion and *Metaphor* by which the Church was usually represented; and to put us in Mind that we are *tossed* up and down in this World as upon a *stormy* and *tempestuous Sea*, and that out of the *Church* there is no safe Passage to Heaven, the *Harbour* we all hope to arrive at. Before the Entrance (especially after they began to arrive at more Perfection) was the *Porch*, in greater Churches, of somewhat larger Capacity, *adorn'd* many times with goodly *Porticoes*, Marble Columns, Fountains, and Cisterns of Water, and cover'd over for the Conveniency of those that stood or walked there; here stood the lowest Order of the *Penitents*, begging the Prayers of the *Faithful* as they went in. For the Church it self, it consisted generally of three Parts; the first was the *Narthex* (which we have no proper Word to express;) it was that Part of the Church that lay next to the great Door, by which they entred in; in the first Part of it stood the *Catechumens*, or first Learners of Christianity, in the Middle the *Euergumeni*, or those who

Consecration of Churches. 95

who were possess'd by *Satan*, and in this Part also stood the *Font*, or Place of *Baptismal* Initiation; and towards the upper End was the Place of the *Hearers*, who were one of the Ranks of *Penitents*. The second Part contain'd the Middle or main Body of the Church, (call'd *Navis* by the *Latins*, from whence comes our Term of *Nave* of the Church) where the *Faithful* assembled for the Celebration of Divine Service, the Men and the Women having their distinct Apartments, lest, at such Times, unchast and irregular Appetites should be kindled by a promiscuous interfering with one another. In this Part of the Church, next to the entring into it, stood the *Class of the Penitents*, who were call'd *Kneelers*, because at their going out they fell down upon their *Knees* before the Bishop, who *laid his Hands* upon them. Next to them was the *Pulpit*, or rather *Reading Desk*, where the Scriptures were read and preach'd to the People. Above that were the *Faithful*, the highest Rank and Order of the People, and who alone communicated at the *Lord's Table*. The Third Part was the *Chancel*, separated from the rest of the Church by *neat Rails*; into this Part none might come but such as were in *Holy Orders*, unless it were the *Greek Emperors*, who were

were allow'd to come up to the Table to make their Offerings. Within this Division the most considerable Thing was the *Altar* (as they metaphorically call'd it, because there they offer'd the commemorative Sacrifice of Christ's Body and Blood) behind which, at the very upper End of the *Chancel*, was the *Chair* or *Throne* of the Bishop, on both Sides whereof was the Seats of the *Presbyters* (for the *Deacons* might not here sit down;) the *Bishop's Throne* was rais'd up somewhat higher from the Ground, and from thence I suppose it was that he usually deliver'd his Sermons to the People. Adjoining to the *Chancel*, on the North Side, was the *Diaconicon*, so call'd because it was peculiarly committed to the *Deacon* of the Place; it was in the Nature of our modern Vestries, the *Sacristy*, wherein the *Plate*, *Vessels*, and *Vestments* belonging to the Church, and other Things, dedicated to Holy Uses, were laid up. On the other Side of the *Chancel* was the *Prothesis*, or Place where Things were prepar'd in Order to the Sacrament, where the Offerings were laid, and what remain'd of the Sacramental Elements, 'till they were dispos'd of. And this may serve for a short View of the Churches of those first Times,

Times, after they began to grow up into Beauty, Order, and Perfection.

“ There is an Objection, says Mr. Hook-
 “ er, (v) against the *Fashion* of our
 “ Churches, as being framed according
 “ to the Pattern of the *Jewish* Temple ;
 “ a Fault no less grievous, if it were
 “ true, than if some King should build
 “ his Mansion-House by the Model of
 “ *Solomon's* Palace. So far as our *Church-*
 “ *es* and their *Temple* have one End,
 “ what should lett, but that they may
 “ lawfully have *one Form*? The *Temple*
 “ was for Sacrifice, and therefore had
 “ Rooms for that Purpose, such as Ours
 “ have none ; our Churches are Places
 “ provided, that the People might there
 “ assemble themselves in due and *de-*
 “ *cent* Manner, according to their sever-
 “ al Degrees and Orders ; which Thing
 “ being common unto us with *Jews*,
 “ we have our Churches divided, tho'
 “ not into so many Partitions as theirs.
 “ We have but one between the *Clergy*
 “ and the rest (which yet is not ob-
 “ serv'd with any great Strictness or
 “ Curiosity) ; the Cause whereof, at the
 “ first, was, that as many as were ca-
 “ pable of the *Holy* Mysteries, might
 “ there assemble themselves, and no o-
 “ ther creep in amongst them. This is
 O now

98 *An Historical Essay upon the*

“ now made a Matter so heinous, as if
 “ our Religion were thereby become
 “ plain *Judaism*.

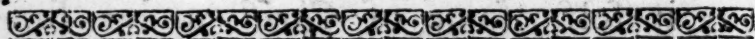
Upon a Review of this ancient Pattern of the *Primitive Churches*, how solemn and well-disposed, how venerable does the Fashion of them appear? How adapted to preserve the *Decency and Order* of Divine Worship? How exact and regulated in their several Divisions, to accommodate the Congregation, and to place them according to their Degrees in *Spiritual* Improvements? But our *Modern* Fabricks, we perceive, have no Regard to Provisions of this Kind; the Figure of our late Churches, if we compare them with the *Primitive*, resemble more the Form of *Theaters* than the regular Model of the *first* Christians.

The distinguishing of our Churches by the *Names* of *Angels*, or *Saints*, or *Martyrs*, is a Custom of a very ancient Date. That Churches were *Consecrated* to none but to the *Lord* only, the *Grammatical* Construction of the Word is a good Evidence, *Church*, in *Greek*, signifying the *Lord's House*. But as the Multitude and Variety of Things have given Occasion to their being known by different Titles and Appellations, so the Founders of Churches pleas'd their own Fancies, by distinguishing their *New Fabricks* by particular

Consecration of Churches: 99

particular *Names*, with a Design, that whenever those Buildings came to be mention'd, the Names should put them in Mind of something memorable in the Character of the Persons or Things whose Titles they bore. And thus it comes to pass that all Churches have had their *Names*, some as Memorials of *Peace*, some of *Wisdom*, some in Memory of the *Trinity* it self, some of *Christ* under sundry Titles, of the *Blessed Virgin* not a few, many of one *Apostle*, *Saint*, or *Martyr*, many of *all*. The Design of this Distinction of Churches has given Occasion to *Ignorant* and *Fanatic* Persons, in these later Ages, to charge it with *Superstition*; as if those Places that were denominated of *Angels* and *Saints*, were ordain'd for the Service of those *Glorious Creatures*; or as if those *Glorious* Beings were to take such Places under their immediate Patronage and Protection. But, as *St. Austin* observes, *we appoint no Churches to Them, because they are not to us as Gods. The Nations to their Gods erected Temples; we, not Temples to our Martyrs as unto Gods, but Memorials as unto dead Men, whose Spirits with God are still Living.* But whatever our Ancestors might design, or however *Superstitious* their Meaning was in *Naming* their Churches, we have nothing of this

Nature to answer for, since 'tis for meer *Distinction* that we make Use of Names without any other Regard. The *Sectarists* themselves, in some Measure, comply with the Custom of distinguishing their *Meeting-Houses* by the Names of *Saints*, that is, of their *Holder-forth*, the only *Saints* they *canonize* and adore.



C H A P. IX.

The publick Feastings, and other Demonstrations of Joy used by Jews, Heathens, and Christians, upon the Days of the Consecration of their Temples and Churches.



IT may not a little conduce to prove the high Esteem which the *Consecration of sacred Places* had in primitive Times, by taking a short View of the splendid *Solemnities*, the general *Concourse* of People, the *magnificent Feasts*, used anciently by all *Sorts of Men* upon those joyful *Occasions*.

Look

Consecration of Churches. 101

Look upon the *Dedication* of *Solomon's Temple*, and we shall find, that there assembled at that Time, and upon that Occasion, *the Elders of Israel, and all the Heads of the Tribes, the Chief of the Fathers of the Children of Israel*, 1 Kings viii. 1. *All the Men of Israel*, v. 2. *the Priests and Levites*, v. 4. Nor were the *Sacrifices* short of this great Assembly, it being said that *Solomon* sacrific'd to the Lord *Two and twenty thousand Oxen, and a Hundred and twenty thousand Sheep*, v. 63. so many, that *they could not be told nor numbered for Multitude*, v. 5. Here is sufficient, not only to answer the End of the most solemn *Sacrifice*, but a *Royal Feast*, suitable to entertain a *Million* of People, and provided on Purpose to add a greater Honour to the *Dedication* of that glorious *Temple*, for so it follows in the Text, v. 65. *And at that Time Solomon held a Feast, and all Israel with him, a great Congregation, from the Entering in of Hamath unto the River of Egypt, before the Lord our God, seven Days and seven Days, even fourteen Days.*

The *second Temple*, as it was short of this in Bigness and outward Beauties, so fell it short also in the Poms of the *Dedication*, the People being then in a low Condition, impoverish'd by their long *Captivity*, and not fully settled; and yet the

the Scripture (w) informs us, That the Children of Israel, the Priests and Levites, and the rest of the Children of the Captivity, kept the Dedication of this House of God with Joy; and offer'd, at the Dedication of this House of God, an hundred Bulls, two hundred Rams, and four hundred Lambs; far short indeed of the Magnificence of Solomon's in those happy Days, and yet agreeable enough to their present Fortunes.

Of the Solemnities and Feasts of Dedication in the Time of Judas Maccabeus we have said something already. The Dedication of the Temple built by Herod follows next, of which Josephus gives this Account (x), They celebrated a great Feast in Honour of the Restoration of the Temple; which being told us in the general, he next adds, That the King offer'd up three hundred Oxen unto God, and the rest, of them each one according to his Ability, offer'd so many Sacrifices, that they could hardly be numbered. About the very Time of the Celebration of this Feast, in Honour of the Re-edification of the Temple, the King's Day of Coronation fell out, which he used to solemnize every Year with great Joy, and for this twofold Occasion the Solemnity and Joy were far more sumptuous and compleat.

The

(w) Ezra 6. 16, 17.

(x) Joseph. l. 15. c. 14.

Consecration of Churches. 103

The Romans, guided by Example or the Light of Nature, perform'd these *Dedications* with as great Pomp and Solemnity (and probably with as splendid *Feasts*) as the *Jews* had done before them. Concerning which, besides what has been said already, we need but look upon the *Dedication* of the *Capitol* in the Reign of *Vespasian*, the Pomp and Order of it thus describ'd by *Tacitus*, (y) first, in the Way of Preamble : *Undecimo Kal. Julias, serenâ luce, spatium omne quod Templo dicabatur evinctum vittis coronisque; ingressi milites, quibus fausta nomina, felicibus ramis. Dein Virgines Vestales cum pueris puellisque, Patrimis Matrimisque, aquâ rivis & fontibus amnibusque haustâ perluere.* Upon the eleventh of the *Kalends* of *July*, (or twenty first of *June*) being a promising fair Day, the whole Plot of the Temple was bound and tied about with *Fillets* and *Garlands* : The *Soldiers*, whose Names had fortunate Significations, enter'd in with *Olive Branches* in their Hands, (for so I think the Author means by *felicibus ramis*.) Afterwards the *Vestal Virgins*, with *Boys* and *Girls* that had both Father and Mother alive, washed it with Waters fetched from *Rivers*, and *Springs*, and running *Streams*. It follows in the Author, *Tum Helvidius Priscus Prætor, præeunte Plauto Eliano Pontifice,*

(y) *Corn. Tacit. Hist. l. 4.*

*tifice, lustrata Bove, &c. Then Helvidius Priscus the Prætor, Plautus Elianus the Chief Pontifex, dictating the solemn Words of the Dedication, (for so I understand the Word *præunte* in that Place) hallowed the Floor with the solemn Sacrifice of a Swine, a Sheep, and a Bullock, and laying the Entrails upon a green Turf, calling first upon Jupiter, Juno, Minerva, and the rest of the Gods, Protectors of the Empire, that they would prosper the Work, exalt and advance this their own Habitation, begun by the Devotion of Men, with their divine and celestial Power; the Magistrates and Priests, the Senate and Gentlemen, with a great Part of the People, pressing with great Desire and Joy to behold the Ceremonies. And tho' this seems to be the Dedication only of the *Area* or *Plot* of Ground upon which the *Capitol* was built, yet it shews very plainly with what Solemnity and Pomp of Ceremonies the ancient Romans used to celebrate their *Dedications*.*

But for the Practice of *Christians*, it is evident, that they were no sooner freed from the Tyranny of Persecution, in the Time of *Constantine*, but they observ'd these *Dedications* with the greatest Solemnities, and the most magnificent Entertainments, call'd therefore ἐσχαυίων ἱορταί, *Dedication-Feasts*, celebrated with a great Concourse of Prelates and People from

all

Consecration of Churches. 105

all Parts, and solemniz'd with publick Prayers and eloquent Orations. When the Emperor had founded the Temple of the *Holy Martyrs* at *Jerusalem*, we find that he prepar'd himself for the *Encoenia*, or its *Dedication*, inviting and summoning the most eminent Prelates of those Parts, and entertaining them with *Feasts* in the most munificent and sumptuous Manner. The particular Solemnities of this *Dedication* are related before; but *Nicephorus* adds farther (z), *It was* (says the Historian) *the fourteenth Day of September, which from that Time forwards was annually kept Holy in the Church of Jerusalem by all Sorts of People, the Church then being assembled in an holy Congregation eight Days together*; but this more properly belongs to the next Chapter, where we shall again meet with it. Nor was the Ceremony or the religious Part of these *Dedications* perform'd with less Solemnity than with *Feasting* and *Entertainments*; that Office belonging anciently to the *Bishop*, and not communicable to any of inferior *Orders*, as well to add the greater Reputation to that sacred Action, as to preserve the Dignity and Esteem of the *Episcopal* Calling. And since the Bishops, in their several Charges, were the only Persons that could administer this *Rite*, I

P cannot

(z) Niceph. Hist. Ecc. l. 8. c. 50.

cannot doubt but there was some *set* and appointed *Form*; in which that Action was then celebrated; tho' what that *Form* was, of what particular Ceremonies, what *Prayers* and *Benedictions* it consisted, I have not found amongst the Authors of those Times, that I dare rely upon.

Where now is the *Popery* or the *Prophaneness* of making *Feasts* and Entertainments upon the *Day* of our Churches *Dedications*? Where's the *Uncourtlines*, the *Anti-Protestantism*, if, besides the *Bishop* of the *Diocese*, the *Prelates* and the *Clergy* who reside near, should grace the Solemnity with their *Presence*? Where's the *disobliging* of *Dissenters*, the *Heterodoxy*, or the Harm done, if a *Regiment* of the *Royal Guards* were, at the Command of the *Bishop*, to attend and set off the Ceremony? If *Bonfires*, and *Illuminations*, and the Discharge of the great *Artillery*, were order'd, by Authority, to recommend the Festivity of the Occasion.

CHAP.



C H A P. X.

The Antiquity of observing Annual Festivals, in Memory of the Day of the Consecration of Churches ; with an Account of our Country Wakes in England, of their Rise, and Establishment.

THE same natural Regard to Religion that induc'd Mankind, in all Ages, solemnly to consecrate Places for the Exercise of divine Service, moved them likewise annually to observe the Day of the Consecration, and to renew those Feasts and publick Rejoycings that had been once celebrated in Honour of so great a Work. The Custom of keeping Anniversary Days we often meet with in the Roman Annals, in Memory of the Dedication of their Temples ; and the Church-History gives us frequent Instances of these yearly Solemnities, in Commemoration of the Consecration of Churches. Some Shadow of this Custom still remains

among us at this Day, in the *Wakes* observ'd in several Counties, which, in Correspondence with the *Encœnia* of the ancient Church, are *annual Festivals*, kept in Country Villages, in Memory of the *Dedication* of their particular Churches.

These *Anniversary Festivals* were first (as I suppose) introduc'd among the *Jews* by *Judas Maccabeus*, who having kept the *Dedication* of the *Altar* eight Days together, (a) with his Brethren, and with the whole Congregation of *Israel*, ordained, that the Days of the *Dedication* of the *Altar* should be kept in their Season from Year to Year, by the Space of eight Days, with Mirth and Gladness. This they ordained by a common Statute and Decree, that every Year those Days should be kept by the whole Nation of the *Jews*. *Josephus* gives this Account of the Solemnity, "For eight
"Days together, (and consequently upon
"a Sabbath-day) *Judas* celebrated the
"Festival of the Recovery of the Temple,
"in which there was no Kind of innocent
"Recreation omitted; the People were
"entertain'd with sumptuous and costly
"Feasts; every Thing sounded out Hymns
"and Psalms to the Praise of God; and
"from that Time this Custom prevail'd
"among us, and we call it the Festival of
"Lights, for this Reason, as I think, be-
"cause

(a) 2 Macc. c. 4. v. 56, 59.

"cause so great a Happiness shone unexpectedly upon us."

The Romans observ'd this *Annual Ceremony* likewise; which, whether they did in Imitation of the *Jews*, or that the *Jews* took up this Custom to conform with them, who were then grown considerable in the Eye of the World, is hard to determine; but for the *Romans*, it is most certain, that they observ'd the *Anniversary* of many of their *Dedications* in a *Festival Way*, (b) which, if we consult the *Roman Kalendar*, we shall find dispos'd of two or three in one Month; so frequent were those Festivals among the *Romans*, and so religiously observ'd both by *Jews* and *Gentiles*.

It is the less to be admir'd therefore if the *Christians*, in Imitation of these Examples, observ'd also these *Annual Solemnities* in Memory of the *Dedication* of their Churches; more especially regarding the Practice of the *Jews*, and the Honour our *Saviour* did the *Anniversary* Feast of the *Dedication* of the Temple by his own Presence.

The first *Annual Festival* of this Nature, which we find in *Ecclesiastical History*, is that of the fourteenth of *September*, held once a Year in *Jerusalem*, in Memory of the *Dedication* of the Church
of

(b) *Ovid. de Fastis.*

of the *Holy Martyrs*, so solemnly celebrated by the Emperor *Constantine*, and continu'd *eight Days* together without Intermission. This conforms exactly with the *Encænia* of the *Jews*, propos'd (no Question) for their Pattern in that *Annual Festival*. *Gregory Nazianzen* has likewise told us (c), *That it was an old Law, and very excellently constituted, to do Honour to Churches, by the Feasts of their Dedication; and that not for once only, but upon the annual Return of the same Day of their Consecrations; lest otherwise such remarkable Transactions might be forgotten in a long Tract of Time, and be at last quite buried in the Grave of Oblivion.* This makes it evident, that these *Anniversary Feasts* were of long standing in the Church, and much earlier than the *Decretal* of Pope *Felix the Fourth*, who in respect to this ancient Custom decreed, *That the Feasts of the Dedication of Churches, and Consecration of Bishops, are to be celebrated yearly, according to the Lord's Example, who went up to Jerusalem, with the rest of the People, to solemnize the Feast of the Dedication, as the Scripture tells us.* Where we are to observe, that this Pope builds not this Injunction upon his own sole Power, but as that Power was countenanc'd and receiv'd a Sanction by our *Saviour's Practice.* But

(c) *Orat.* 43.

Consecration of Churches. 111

But to come nearer to our selves: There was a Council held at *Oxford* in the Year 1222, (d) where, among other Laws for the Government of the *Church*, the *Festivals* were divided into three several Ranks: In the first, were those *quæ omni veneratione servanda erant*, that were to be observ'd with all Reverence and Solemnity: Of this Sort were all the *Lord's Days*, and all the other *Festivals* yet observ'd among us, with many others now struck out of the *Kalendar*; and at last, the *Feasts of the Dedication* of particular Churches, which, in their several Parishes, were to be observ'd with the same Reverence and Solemnity as the others were. So also, in a *Synod* of Archbishop *Isip's* (e), who was promoted to that *See* in the Year 1349, it was decreed, "That on the principal *Feasts* there named, there should be a more strict and precise Restraint from Labour than had been before;" and among them we find, the *Dedication Feasts of particular Churches* to be as high in their Esteem as any of the greater *Festivals*. From hence it most evidently appears, that the *Dedication Feast* was to be annually observ'd in each several Parish, with a Solemnity equal to the greater Festivals, and

(d) Lindwood.

(e) *Ibid.* de Feriis, lib. 2.

and that it was to be celebrated on that very Day of the Week, Month, and Year, whereon the Church was consecrated at the first.

This Custom, however defended by Antiquity, was at length found to draw along with it no small Inconvenience; and therefore it pleased *Henry the Eighth*, in the Year 1536, to send out his Royal Injunctions, amongst other Things, for the Restraint of *Holy Days*; in which, that which most concerns this Business, are these two Particulars: *First*, That the *Dedication of Churches* shall, in all Places throughout the Realm, be celebrated and kept upon the *first Sunday* of the Month of *October*, for ever, and upon no other Day: *Secondly*, That the *Feast of the Patron* of every Church within this Realm, called anciently the *Church Holy-Day*, shall not henceforth be kept and observed as an *Holy-Day*, as heretofore hath been used; but that it shall be lawful to all and singular Persons, resident or dwelling within this Realm, to go to their Work, Occupation, or Mystery, and the same truly to exercise and occupy upon the said Feast, as upon any other Work-Day, except the said Feast or Church-Day be such as must be else universally observed and kept as an *Holy-Day* by this Ordinance following. Now how far these Injunctions

Consecration of Churches. 113

ons were observ'd in these Particulars, whether they ended upon the Death of the Lord *Cromwell*, by whose Authority in *Convocation* they were first set out, and recommended to the King, I am not able to determine.

But upon the best Information I can meet with, this seems to have been the Custom 'till the Reign of King *James the First*, That in such Places, where the Day of the *Dedication* of the several Churches was worn out of Memory, the *Festival* was observ'd upon the first *Sunday* in *October*, or the next *Sunday* after *Michaelmas-Day*, (which is call'd *Festum Dedicationis Ecclesiae* in the *Martyrology*) or not kept at all: But where there was any constant Tradition of the Day of the *Dedication* of particular Churches, in all such Places the *Feasts* were transferr'd to the *Sunday* following, and then joyfully celebrated in liberal *Entertainments*, harmless *Sports*, and Man-like *Exercises*. And in this State they continued in most Parts of the Realm, by the Name of *Feasts* and *Wakes*, 'till the *Sabbatarian* Doctrine began to get Ground, and the *Puritans* contended that the Commandment of the *Sabbath* was punctually and literally to be observ'd under the *Christian* Dispensation. This Notion had obtain'd among some of the

Q

Clergy

Clergy and the Magistrates, who oblig'd the People to the *Letter of the Law*, and restrain'd them from going about even their lawful and necessary Occasions.

King *James*, having made a Progress into *Lancashire*, observ'd, that the excessive Scruples of some *Magistrates* and *Ministers*, and their tying up People from all Sort of *Relaxation* on the *Sunday*, had given the *Papists* an Occasion to mis-report the *Church of England*, as if no *innocent Recreation* was allow'd among the *Reformed*: Now, to prevent their gaining *Profelytes* upon this Colour, the King, then at *Greenwich*, publish'd the following *Declaration*.

“ That for his good Peoples lawful
“ *Recreations*, his Pleasure was, that after
“ the End of *Divine Service* they
“ should not be disturb'd, letted, or discourag'd,
“ from any lawful *Recreations*;
“ nor from having of *May-Games*, *Whitsun-Ales*,
“ or *Morrice-Dances*, and setting up of *May-Poles*,
“ or other *Sports* therewith used, so as the same be
“ had in due and convenient Time, without
“ *Impediment* or Lett of *Divine Service*.

This *Declaration* was design'd, by the King, for the Use of *Lancashire* only, and lay almost unregarded 'till King *Charles the First* reviv'd it, and publish'd it

Consecration of Churches. 115

it again with an additional *Clause* of his own; the Occasion of it was this: Some of the Judges had made Orders, at the *Affizes*, to suppress all *Revels* and *Church-Ales* upon the *Sunday*; and the publishing this Order was enjoyn'd the *Parochial* Clergy, on the first *Sunday* in *February* every Year. And in this Business Sir *Thomas Richardson*, Chief Justice of the *King's Bench*, was particularly active, at the *Lent Affizes* in *Somersetshire*. The enjoining the Clergy to publish the *Judges* Orders in their Churches, was look'd upon as an Imposition, and an Encroachment upon the *Ecclesiastical* Courts. Dr. *Laud*, Bishop of *London*, complain'd of this Usage to the King, who commanded the Chief Justice to discharge the Order at the next *Affizes*. *Richardson* was so far from obeying his Majesty, that he confirm'd his former Proceedings, and made them more *menacing* than before. The King, much displeas'd with *Richardson's* Resolution, commanded the Bishop of *London* to write to the Bishop of *Bath and Wells* for an Account of Matter of Fact, and in what Manner the *Wakes* and other *Festivals* were managed; upon the Receipt of this Letter the Bishop sent for above Seventy Clergy-men, of Character, living in the Country; these Divines certify'd under their

Hands, " That on the *Festivals*, which
 " commonly fell on the *Sunday*, Divine
 " Service was most solemnly perform'd,
 " and the Congregation fuller, both in
 " the *Forenoon* and in the *Afternoon*, than
 " upon any other *Sunday*: That the
 " People desir'd they might be continu'd,
 " and that the *Clergy*, in most Places,
 " were of the same Sentiment; they believ'd these *Annual Solemnities* service-
 " able for preserving the *Memory* of the
 " *Dedication of Churches*, for making up
 " *Differences* by the Meeting of *Friends*,
 " for cultivating a good *Correspondence*
 " among Neighbours, and for refresh-
 " ing the *Poor* with the *Entertainments*
 " made upon these *Anniversaries*.

This Representation of the Case, and to put a Stop to the *Sabbatarian* Controversy that began to spread, induc'd the King to publish his Father's *Declaration*, with a *Supplement* of his own; which was in these Words:

" Now out of a like pious Care for
 " the *Service of God*, and for suppress-
 " sing of any *Humours* that oppose the
 " *Truth*, and for the Ease, and Com-
 " fort, and *Recreation* of our well-de-
 " serving People, We do ratify and pub-
 " lish our Blessed Father's *Declaration*;
 " the rather, because, of late, in some
 " Counties

Consecration of Churches. 117

“ Counties of our Kingdom, we find,
“ that under *Pretence* of taking away *A-*
“ *buses*, there hath been a general
“ *Forbidding*, not only of ordinary
“ *Meetings*, but of the *Feasts* of the *De-*
“ *dication of Churches*, commonly call’d
“ *Wakes*. Now, our expresse Will and
“ and Pleasure is, That these *Feasts*,
“ with others, shall be observ’d; and that
“ our *Justices of the Peace*, in their se-
“ veral Divisions, shall look to it, both
“ that all Disorders there may be pre-
“ sented or punish’d, and that all *Neigh-*
“ *bourhood* and *Freedom*, with *Man-like*
“ and *lawful Exercises*, be used. And
“ we farther Command our *Justices of*
“ *Affize*, in their several *Circuits*, to see
“ that no Man do molest or trouble any
“ of our Loyal and Dutiful People in
“ or for their lawful *Recreations*, having
“ *first* done their Duty to *God*, and con-
“ tinuing in Obedience to us and our
“ *Laws*. And of this we Command all
“ our *Judges*, *Justices of the Peace*, as
“ well within *Liberties* as without,
“ *Mayors*, *Bayliffs*, *Constables*, and other
“ *Officers*, to take Notice, and to see ob-
“ serv’d, as they tender our *Displeasure*.
“ And we farther Will, That *Publica-*
“ *tion* of this our Command be made,
“ by Order from the *Bishops*, through
“ all

118 *An Historical Essay upon the*

"all the Parish-Churches of their several Dioceses respectively.

Given at our Palace, at Westminster, October 18, in the Ninth Year of our Reign, 1633.

This Declaration gave great Offence to the Puritans, who, to a Man, contended, that the strict Ceremonies of the Jewish Sabbath were binding upon Christians; and, glad of any Pretence to affront the Court, the Scribblers of the Party were set to Work, to asperse the King, as if he were hurrying in Popery, and recommending Profaneness to his Subjects. However, the Custom of Feasting and Sporting at Country Wakes, upon the Sundays, was still kept up in most Villages, and, I am inform'd, prevails at this Day in some of the remote Parts of the Kingdom. I shall not dip my Fingers in this Controversy; but this is certain, that those precise Reformers, who so religiously deny'd the People the Use of Feasting and Recreations upon the Lord's-Day, strain'd the Observation of it higher than the Jews ever pretended to in their sanctifying of the Sabbath it self; for the Commandment, by so strictly prohibiting all Manner of Work, did, questionless, permit some Manner of Pleasures; otherwise, the Sabbatical Rest had been more

Consecration of Churches. 119

more afflictive than the *Week-Days* Labour, and none had gain'd more by it than the *Ox*, and the *Ass*, and Beasts of Burden; and that seemingly rigid Injunction, *Let none go out of his Place on the Seventh Day*, is not literally to be understood, says *Tostatus* the Commentator, otherwise it had been a greater Bondage to that wretched People than all the Drudgeries of *Egypt*. The Learned *Buxtorf*, in his *Jewish Synagogue*, informs us, that it was permitted that their young Men might Walk, and Run, and Dance, upon the Sabbath-Day, and Leap, and Jump, and use other Man-like Exercises. But this Dispute is too tender for me to meddle with, and therefore I dismiss it.

Thus have I finish'd this *Historical Essay* upon the *Consecration of Churches*; and, upon a Review of the whole, I have Confidence (perhaps it may be Boldness) enough to challenge the Reader, if he will be as ingenuous as he ought, to be as severe as he will; and in Defiance of all the Enemies of this Rite, of what Name or Party soever, to conclude in the Words of *Pilate* to the turbulent *Jews*, *What I have written, I have written.*

The E N D.



A
F O R M
O F
Consecrating CHURCHES,
CHAPELS, and CHURCH-YARDS,
or PLACES of BURIAL. Agreed
upon in the *Lower-House* of *Convoca-*
tion in the Year 1712.



WHEN the *Bishop* and the *Clergy* (of which there shall be two at least) have enter'd the *Church*, or *Chapel*, in their several *Habits*, let them, as they walk up from the *West* to the *East End*, repeat alternately the 24th *Psalms*, the *Bishop* beginning, *The Earth is the Lords*, with *Gloria Patri*.

When they are come to the *Lord's Table*, the *Bishop*, sitting in his *Chair*, shall have the Instruments of *Dedication*, *Donation*, and *Endowment* of the *Church*, or *Chapel*, *Church-Yard*, or *Burial-Place*,

R

presented

presented to him by the *Founder*, or some proper Substitute, which he shall cause to be read by his *Register*, or other Officer deputed for that Purpose: and after that, the Bishop shall lay such Instrument or Instruments upon the *Table*, and standing on the *North Side*, shall turn to the Congregation, and say,

Dearly Beloved in the Lord, forasmuch as in all Ages of the World, devout and holy Men, moved either by the secret Inspiration of the Holy Spirit, or by express Command of God, or by their own Reason and Sense of the natural Decency of Things, have erected Houses, Tabernacles, Temples, Synagogues, and Churches, for the Worship of God, and separated them from all profane and common Uses, in order to fill Mens Minds with greater Reverence for his glorious Majesty, and affect their Hearts with more Devotion and Humility when they approach his sacred Presence; all which pious Designs have been approv'd, and graciously accepted by our heavenly Father; let us not doubt but he will also favourably approve this our godly Purpose, of sanctifying this Place, and setting it a part, in solemn Manner, to the Performance of the several Offices of our religious Worship; and let us faithfully and devoutly beg his Blessing on this our Undertaking, and say,

[Here let the Bishop kneel on the North-Side of the Table.]

O Eternal God, mighty in Power, of Majesty incomprehensible, whom even the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain, much less the Walls of Temples made with Hands; and who yet has graciously been pleas'd to promise thy especial Presence in whatever Place even two or three of thy faithful Servants shall assemble

Consecrating CHURCHES. 123

assemble in thy Name, to offer up their Supplications and their Praises to thee: Vouchsafe, O Lord, to be now present with us, who are gather'd here together, to Consecrate this Place (with all Humility and Readiness of Heart) for ever, to the Honour of thy great Name, separating it from henceforth from all unhalloved, ordinary, and common Uses, and dedicating it entirely to thy Service, for reading thy most holy Word, for celebrating thy blessed Sacraments, for offering to thy glorious Majesty the Sacrifices of Prayer and Thanksgiving, for blessing thy People in thy Name, and for Performance of all other holy Ordinances. Accept, O Lord, this Service at our Hands, and bless it in such Manner, and with such Success, as may tend most to thy Glory, and the Furtherance of our Happiness, thro' Jesus Christ our blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen.

WE know, O Lord, we are not worthy to appoint unto thee any Place, or offer to thee any Thing belonging to us; yet, we beseech thee, out of thine infinite Goodness, to be present now among us in this religious Action, and graciously to accept and prosper this our Undertaking. Receive the Prayers and Intercessions of us, and all other thy Servants, who, either now or hereafter entering into this thy House, shall call upon thee; and give both them and us Grace (whenever we draw near to thy Courts) to prepare our Hearts with Reverence and godly Fear; affect us with an awful Apprehension of thy Heavenly Majesty, and with a deep Sense of our own Unworthiness to appear before thee, that so approaching thy Sanctuary with Lowliness and Devotion, we may be careful to bring with us clean Thoughts, pure and humble Hearts, Bodies undefiled, and Minds sanctified, and, washing our Hands in Innocency, may come to thine Altar an acceptable People, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

After this, let the *Bishop*, continuing where he is, say the following Prayers, standing up, and with his *Face* to the Congregation.

Regard, O Lord, the Supplications of thy Servants, and grant that whosoever shall be dedicated to thee in thy House by Baptism, may be sanctify'd with the Holy Ghost, deliver'd from thy Wrath, receiv'd into the Ark of Christ's Church, and ever remain in the Number of thy faithful and elect Children. Amen.

Grant, O Lord, that they who in this Place shall, in their own Persons, undertake to renew the Promises and Vows made by their Sureties for them at their Baptism, and thereupon shall be confirm'd by the Bishop, may receive such a Measure of thy Holy Spirit, that they may be enabled faithfully to fulfil the same, and grow in Grace to their Live's End. Amen.

Grant, O Lord, that whosoever shall, in this Place, receive the Blessed Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, thy Son, may come with Faith, Charity, and true Repentance, and being fulfill'd with thy Grace and heavenly Benediction, may, to their great and endless Comfort, obtain Remission of their Sins, and all other Benefits of his Passion. Amen.

Grant, O Lord, that by thy Holy Word, which shall be read and preach'd within this Place, the Hearers may both perceive and know what Things they ought to do, and may have Grace and Power to fulfil the same. Amen.

Grant, O Lord, that whosoever shall be joyn'd together in this Place, in the holy Estate of Matrimony, may surely perform and keep the Vow and Covenant

Consecrating CHURCHES. 125

venant betwixt them made, and may remain in perfect Love and Peace together unto their Lives End. Amen.

GRant, we beseech thee, Blessed Lord, that whosoever shall draw near unto thee, in this House, to give thee Thanks for the great Benefits they have received at thy Hands, to set forth thy most worthy Praise, to bear thy most holy Word, or to ask such Things as are requisite and necessary as well for the Body as the Soul, may do it with that Steadfastness of Faith, that Seriousness, Attention, and devout Affection, that they may accept their bounden Duty and Service, giving them Grace to be Doers of thy Word, and not Hearers only, and vouchsafing to them whatever else in thy infinite Wisdom and Goodness thou shalt see to be most expedient for them; and this we beg for Jesus Christ his Sake, our blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen.

After this, let one of the *Priests* (the appointed Curate of the Place, if he be present) begin the Service for the Day, except where it is otherwise order'd.

Proper Psalms, 84, 122, 132.

First Lesson, 1 Kings, c. 8. from v. 22. to v. 62.

Second Lesson, St. John, c. 2. from v. 13. to the End.

In the Second Service, after the Commandments and one of the Collects for the Queen, instead of the Collect for the Day, shall be used these following.

O Lord Almighty, King of Heaven and Earth, who, in the Day Time by a Cloud, and in the Night by Fire, didst declare thy Presence by thy moving Tabernacle in the Wilderness, and by like sensible and glorious Manifestations of thy self, didst Consecrate the Temple of Jerusalem for the Place of thy settled Abode

bode among thy chosen People, Vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to encompass this thy House, and all that are in it, with thy gracious Favour; inflame our Hearts with that holy Fire from Heaven, that may consume in us whatsoever is vile and earthy, and kindle in our Souls a fervent and constant Love of thee; make us truly sensible how great an Honour it is to be admitted into thy Sanctuary, to present our selves and our Supplications before the Throne of thy Grace, that so we may never presume to approach thy House with hypocritical and cold Devotions, drawing near unto thee with our Lips, while our Hearts are far from thee: Let us always approach thy Holy Courts with Reverence and godly Fear; let us behave our selves in thy Sanctuary as mindful of thine especial Presence, so that we may depart thence endued with greater Measures of thy Grace, and fulfill'd with thy heavenly Benedictions; thro' Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee, O Father, and the Holy Ghost, be ascrib'd, as is most due, all Glory, Might, and Majesty, both now and evermore. Amen.

O Most Blessed Saviour, who, by thy gracious Presence at the Feast of Dedication, didst approve and honour such religious Services as this which we are now performing unto thee, be present at this Time with us also by thy Holy Spirit; and because Holiness becometh thine House for ever, sanctify us, we pray thee, that we may be living Temples, holy and acceptable unto thee; and so dwell in our Hearts by Faith, and possess our Souls by thy Grace, that nothing which defileth may enter into us; but that being cleans'd from all carnal and corrupt Affections, we may ever be devoutly given to serve thee in all good Works, who art our Saviour, Lord, and God, blessed for evermore. Amen.

Consecrating CHURCHES. 127

The Epistle, 1 Cor. c. 3. from v. 16. to the End.

The Gospel, St. John, c. 10. from v. 22. to v. 30.

After the Communion, before the final Blessing, let the Bishop say,

BLessed be thy Name, O Lord God, for that it pleaseth thee to have thy Habitation among the Sons of Men, and to dwell in the midst of the Assembly of the Saints upon Earth. Bless, we beseech thee, the religious Performance of this Day; and grant that in this Place, now set apart to thy Service, thy holy Name may be worshipp'd in Truth and Purity to all Generations, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

If the Church to be consecrated, be one of those which are order'd to be built by the late Act of Parliament, let the Bishop also say,

BLessed be thy Name, O Lord God, that it hath pleased thee by thy good Spirit to dispose our Sovereign Lady, and the Estates of this Realm, to supply the spiritual Wants of thy People, by appointing this and many other Churches to be erected and dedicated to thy Worship and Service; multiply thy Blessings upon them for their pious Regard to thy Honour and to the Good of Souls; remember them concerning this, and wipe not out the Kindness they have shewn to thy Church, and to the Offices thereof; and grant that our gracious Queen may see and long enjoy the Fruits of her godly Zeal, in the Edification of the Members of our Church, and in the Reduction of those that have strayed from it; that we may all live together in the Unity of the Spirit, and in the Bond of Peace, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

IF

If the Church or Chapel was built and endow'd by any private Person or Persons then alive, let the Bishop say the following Prayer.

Bless'd be thy Name, O Lord, that it hath pleas'd thee to put it into the Heart of thy Servant (or Servants) N_____ to erect this House to thy Honour and Worship. Bless, O Lord, him, (her, or them) his (her, or their) Family and Substance, and accept the Work of his (her, or their) Hands; remember him (her, or them) concerning this; wipe not this Kindness that he (she, or they) hath (or have) shewed for the House of his (her, or their) God, and the Offices thereof; and grant that all they who shall enjoy the Benefit of this pious Work, may shew forth their Thankfulness, by making a right Use of it, to the Glory of thy blessed Name, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
The Peace of God—

When the Service in the Church is finish'd, let the Bishop and Clergy, with the People, go into the Church-Yard, and standing in some convenient Place, let the Bishop say the following Prayer.

O God, who hast taught us in thy holy Word, that there is a Difference between the Spirit of a Beast that goeth downwards to the Earth, and the Spirit of a Man which ascendeth up to God, who gave it; and likewise by the Example of thy holy Servants, in all Ages, hast taught us to assign peculiar Places where the Bodies of thy Saints may rest in Peace, and be preserv'd from all Indignities, whilst their Souls are safely kept in the Hands of their faithful Redeemer. Accept, we beseech thee, this charitable Work of ours, in separating this Portion of Ground to that good Purpose; and give us Grace, that by the frequent Instances

Consecrating CHURCHES. 129

stances of Mortality we behold, we may learn and seriously consider how frail and uncertain our Condition here on Earth is, and so number our Days, as to apply our Hearts unto Wisdom; that in the midst of Life thinking upon Death, and daily preparing our selves for the Judgment that is to follow, we may have our Part in the Resurrection to Life, with him who dy'd for our Sins, and rose again for our Justification, and now liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, One God, World without End. Amen.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you all evermore. Amen.

If there be only a Church-Yard to be consecrated, adjoining to any Church or Chapel, let the Common Service of the Day be read in the Church or Chapel, and at the End thereof let the Instrument of Donation be read before the Bishop in the Church-Yard, and then let the Bishop use the foregoing Prayer.

But if the Church-Yard, or Burial-Place, be remote from the Church or Chapel, it shall suffice to use only the Prayer appointed for that Purpose, the Instrument of Donation being first read.

N. B. The Bishop of Rochester chiefly made Use of this Form in reconsecrating the Church of Greenwich.

The Reader is to observe, that there are extant some other Forms of Consecration: The principal are, A Form of Consecrating a Chapel and Church-Yard, compiled by Dr. Lancelot Andrews, Bishop of Winchester, for the Consecration of Jesus Chapel in the Parish of St. Maries near Southamp-
S ton;

ton; printed at the End of Bishop Sparrow's *Rationale* upon the *Common-Prayer*. A Form used by Dr. Patrick, Bishop of Ely, at the Consecration of a Chapel in Katherine-Hall, Cambridge, to be found at the End of a *Sermon* preach'd upon that Occasion by Dr. Leng. A *Consecration-Prayer* made Use of by Dr. King, Bishop of London, at the Consecration of a Chapel at Edmington, and of another at Clay-Hall, in the Parish of Barkin in Essex; printed in the second Volume of Mr. Collier's *Ecclesiastical History*. I have been inform'd likewise of a Form of Archbishop Laud's, which I never saw. But upon comparing of these several *Forms*, it is easy to discover, that Bishop Andrews found the Materials for all that followed him, and his *Form* has been the Original to which all that I have seen have been oblig'd both for the Contents of the *Prayers*, and the *Ordering* and *Solemnizing* of the *Ceremony*; only Bishop Patrick has added the following *Prayer*, which he used in consecrating the *Communion Plate*, and which all the other *Forms*, in my humble Opinion, seem to want.

Most Blessed Lord, accept, we beseech thee, of the Oblation we make unto thee of these Vessels, which we humbly dedicate to thy Divine Service at thy Holy Table; and as we now wholly give them up to thy Use in the Ministration of the Holy Communion of Christ's Body and Blood, so we pray thee to receive them for thine own; preserve them from being any Way profaned; and being here set apart and consecrated by our Office and Ministry to thy Service, let them always continue to be so employed, through Jesus Christ our only Lord and Saviour. Amen.

The



*The Authority of the Canon-Law for the
Reconsecration of Churches.*

I must be own'd, there is some Difference among the *Canonists* in their Opinions concerning the *Reconsecration* of Churches, tho' all that I have consulted upon this Subject agree, That a *Church* that has been *Rebuilt*, ought to be *Reconsecrated*. The Reader, possibly, may expect some Satisfaction in this Point, especially considering how *lately* it has been debated, and what vile *Aspersions* have been cast upon the most *Primitive Bishop* of *Rochester*, for his *Reconsecrating* of a Church at *Greenwich*, that was built upon the old Foundations; but, Thanks be to God, the Church has a *Prelate* in that *See*, who never knew what *Fear* was, when he was satisfy'd in the *Goodness* of his Design, and till then he would never engage in it; whose *Distinction* it has ever been not to think the worke of a *despised* and *unbefriended Cause*, but is always most vigorous in his *Zeal*, when he sees the *Church* in most *Distress*, and in most Need of it.

I confess my self a very unskilful *Canonist*, and unequal to manage a *Dispute* of this Nature, but I shall faithfully lay down what I have collected

lected from an *Author* * that makes the best Figure in that *Profession*, and whose *Authority* has been ever allow'd its due Weight in the Decision of such *Controversies*.

“ Churches or Altars, whose *Consecrations* are uncertain, ought to be consecrated without Dispute.

“ A Church built upon the *Ground* where an old one stood, is not to be esteem'd the same Church, but must be consecrated, as if there never had been a Church in that Place.

“ If the Walls are rebuilt from the *Foundation*, the Church ought to be consecrated again.

“ If the *Altar* be broken down or remov'd, the Church is to be new consecrated.

“ If the *Fabrick* of a Church becomes wholly ruinous, and is rebuilt from the *Foundation*, it ought to be reconsecrated; but if the Walls by *Degrees* decay, and are gradually repair'd, it ought not; or if a Church be enlarg'd either in *Length, Breadth, or Height*, it ought not to be reconsecrated; because, as the *Canonists* express it, *Sacrum trahit ad se non Sacrum*, that Part that is already Holy, sanctifies whatever is annex'd to it.

“ Churches that have been once consecrated to God, ought never to be reconsecrated, unless they have decay'd, or been consum'd by *Fire*, or been defecrated by the spilling of *Blood*, * or by the Commission of *Fornication* or *Adultery*; because, as an *Infant* that has been once baptiz'd in the Name of the *Father*, and of the *Son*,
and

* *Gratiani Decretum de Consecratione Distinct. 1.*

“ and of the *Holy Ghost*, ought never to be re-
“ baptiz’d ; so a Church once *dedicated* to God,
“ should never be again *consecrated*, provided al-
“ ways, that the Persons officiating at the *Conse-*
“ *cration*, profess’d their Belief in the *Holy Trinity*.
“ The Churches of the *Arians*, where the Do-
“ctrine of the *Trinity* has been undermin’d and
“ exploded, ought to be *reconsecrated* where ever
“ they are found.”

These are some of the *Authorities* the *Canon-Law* affords for the *Reconsecration* of Churches ; which I had no direct Occasion to insist upon, the Case being so indisputable among *Orthodox Divines*, were it not to obviate the abusive and profane Reflections of his Lordship’s Enemies, whose *wretched Libels* must never expect to survive to be devour’d by *Famine*, or the *Teeth* of Time, when the Works of that learned Prelate shall flourish to *distant Ages*, as Monuments of his own *Glory*, and the Church’s *Triumphs*.

F I N I S.



and the fact that the
... to a ...
... never ...
... the ...
... in the ...
... of the ...
... of the ...
... of the ...
... of the ...

The first of these is the fact that the
 Government has been unable to secure
 the necessary funds to carry out its
 policy of non-interference in the
 internal affairs of the country. This
 has been due to a variety of causes,
 including the fact that the Government
 has been unable to secure the necessary
 funds to carry out its policy of non-
 interference in the internal affairs of
 the country. This has been due to a
 variety of causes, including the fact
 that the Government has been unable
 to secure the necessary funds to carry
 out its policy of non-interference in
 the internal affairs of the country.

2 1 1 1 1